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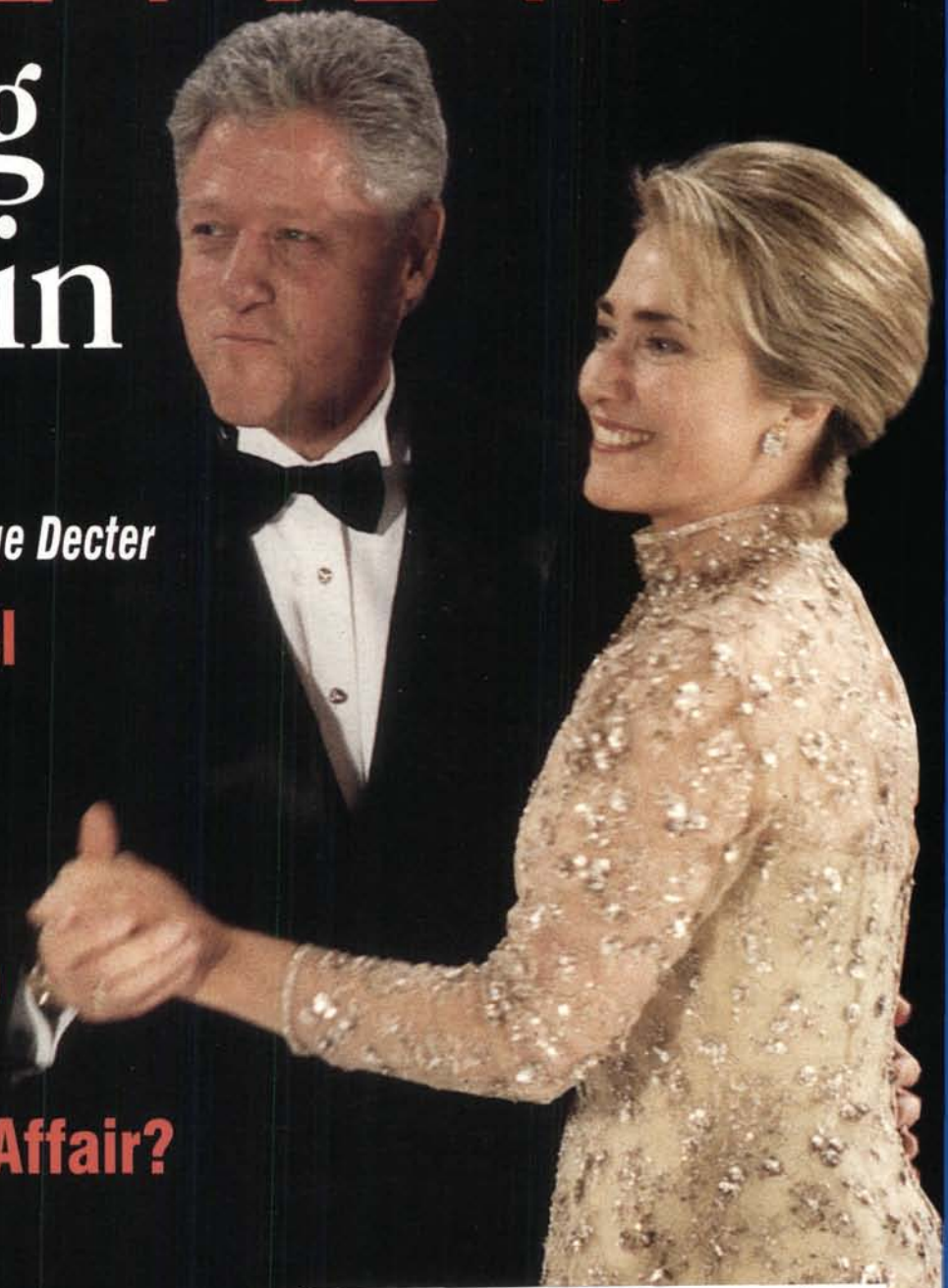
# NATIONAL REVIEW

# Living In Spin



## Sexual Suicide
*John O'Sullivan • Midge Decter*

## Unwise Counsel
*Robert Bork*

## Media FOBs
*Mark Cunningham*

## Clinton v. Nixon
*Richard Brookhiser*

## The End of the Affair?
*The Editors*

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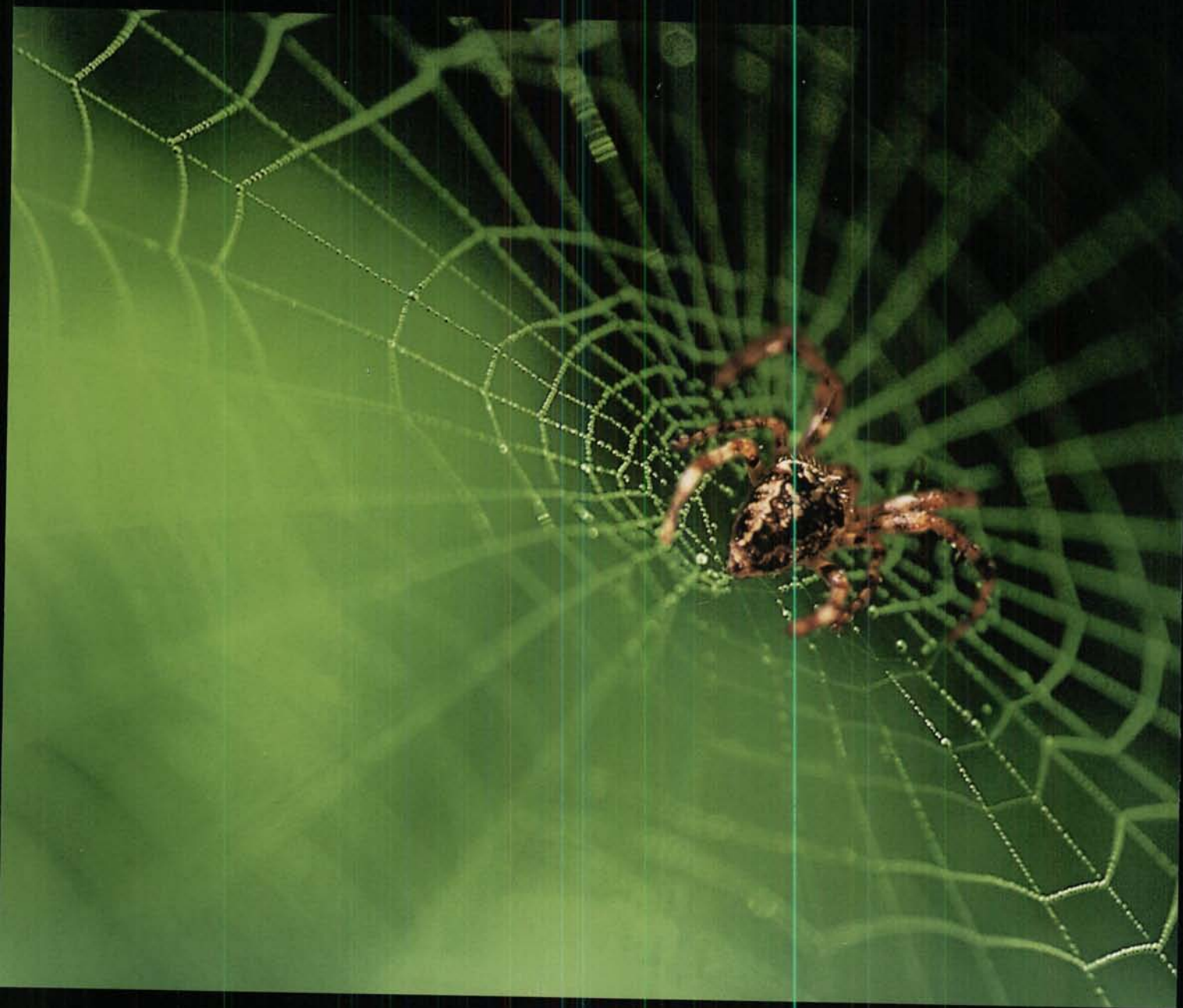

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# NATIONAL REVIEW

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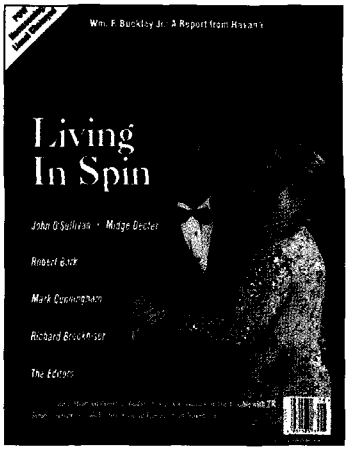


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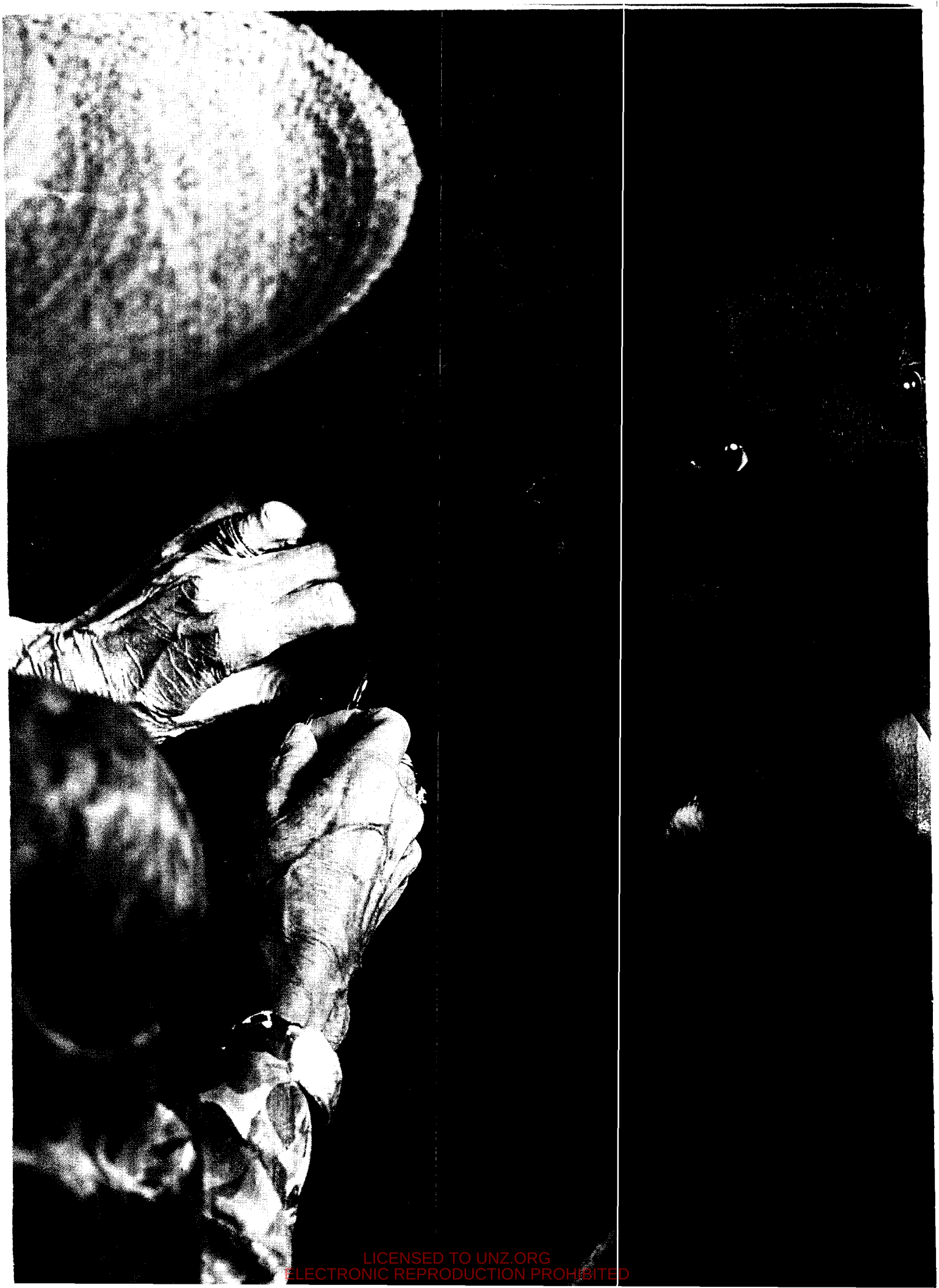

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# LETTERS

### *Honorable Union*

Gerard V. Bradley's "Marriage Penalty" [Jan. 26] is the most insightful piece that I have seen on the subject. I would add that what the Hawaii Supreme Court is contemplating isn't marriage, which is, as the Book of Common Prayer says, "an honorable estate, established by God, regulated by His commandments." To call the union between two persons of the same sex marriage is on a par with declaring dogs to be legally cats. The courts could do it, but it wouldn't help the pooches climb trees.

*Harold O. J. Brown*
*Trinity Evangelical Divinity School*
*Deerfield, Ill.*

### *Dishonorable Party*

I am dismayed that NATIONAL REVIEW supports funding for GOP candidates who refuse to oppose partial-birth abortion ["The Week," Jan. 26], an atrocity you correctly term infanticide. Would you support funding for those who refused to ban killing week-old infants? If we cannot agree that the Republican Party must stand for principle on such a clear-cut issue, then I truly fear for the future of this country.

*Steven S. Neff*
*Yorktown, Va.*

You have endorsed an action that not only calls into question the sincerity of the GOP concerning its right-to-life platform, but also proves that the leaders of the party establishment are more concerned with placating the moderates than with doing what they know is right. It also shows those of us who considered the right to life to be the one defining issue between Democrats and Republicans that we now have no party.

*Cal Ebner*
*Deweyville, Tex.*

A political party should not be just about holding power, but also about rejecting evil.

*George E. Frost*
*East Setauket, N.Y.*

### *Good Catholics?*

I can only assume that Elizabeth Altham ["Letters," Feb. 9] is ignorant of the avalanche of information pouring forth in recent years on French collaboration with the Nazis. She objects to calling the Catholic Church silent, but the Church's "silence" (Archbishop Olivier de Berranger's word) is precisely the behavior for which the archbishop asked forgiveness. In the "Declaration of Repentance," delivered on the eve of the Jewish New Year four months ago, he stated: "The time has come for the Church . . . to ask forgiveness from God and from men. The vast majority of Church officials . . . [under Nazi rule] stuck to an attitude of conformism, caution, and abstention, dictated in part by fear of reprisals. . . . It is important to admit the primary role played by the . . . anti-Jewish stereotypes wrongly perpetuated among Christians in the historical process that led to the Holocaust. In the face of persecution of the Jews . . . silence was the rule, and words in favor of the victims were the exception. Today we confess that that silence was a sin. We beg for the pardon of God, and we ask the Jewish people to hear this word of repentance."

*Richard Grenier*
*Washington, D.C.*

### *Paycheck Protection*

Cristopher Rapp's "Check-mate" [Jan. 26] misstated key facts about the rights of every public-school teacher under the thumb of the California Teachers Association union, an arm of the National Education Association. California teachers *have* the right to resign from formal, full-dues-paying union membership at any time. The U.S. District Court for Southern California signed a settlement order won by the National Right to Work Foundation last December forbidding "window periods" and other union tricks to block teachers' attempts to reclaim all compulsory dues used for non-bargaining activities (*Apple* v. *CTA*).

Furthermore, teachers previously forced to pay for politics are each due a refund of about $200 a year. The settlement order is retroactive for teachers who tried to resign during the 1995–97 school years. (Consequently, this rebate amounts to far more than the campaign-reform initiatives Mr. Rapp mentions would allow, since they do not touch lobbying, issue advocacy, or any federal political spending.) Also, California teachers cannot be forced into the union's "arbitration" while challenging the union's spending on non-bargaining activities. In key Foundation cases, several federal-court rulings have established that workers can proceed at any time directly to a legitimate court for an impartial hearing. The U.S. Supreme Court will hear the Foundation's *ALPA* v. *Miller* case this spring to settle the issue for good.

While Mr. Rapp did recognize the difficulty that objecting workers often face, our attorneys have convinced the courts that the legal burden lies with the unions to prove their expenditures were valid. Thousands of employees are recovering a healthy chunk of their extorted union dues with the Foundation's help.

*Stefan H. Gleason*
*National Right to Work*
*Legal Defense Foundation*
*Springfield, Va.*

*Along with the Individual Rights Foundation and other organizations, National Right to Work is to be congratulated for the victories it has won on behalf of teachers. The* Apple *settlement, filed concurrently with the deadline for my article, is a step in the right direction. Of course, it remains to be seen whether it will be honored by the CTA and vigorously enforced by the courts. And the settlement merely makes it less difficult for teachers to begin the process of reclaiming money deducted for political purposes; it does not hinder the CTA from taking it in the first place. As a practical matter, the burden remains squarely on California's teachers. The Campaign Reform Initiative would help correct this situation.*

—CR

### *The Men of 1912*

John Simon's critique of the movie *Titanic* [Dec. 31] failed to point out one outrageous misrepresentation. The movie portrayed the men of 1912 as cowardly. In fact, the men aboard the *Titanic* exhibited heroic courage and chivalry. Whether today's men would behave as gallantly is highly questionable.

*B. J. Killingsworth*
*Clifton, Va.*

### *Fly the Friendly Skies*

Your Andrew Oliver only encourages the boorish behavior of passengers who can't spend a few hours *not eating* ["Frequent-Flier Feasts," Jan. 26]. All I do on planes is read, sleep, drink coffee, and hold my nose. On my last flight a woman actually changed her brat's diaper in an open row of seats! Were I to run an airline, I would forbid eating, boozing, movies, Walkmen (which I hear), children, and babies (the latter can be placed in kitty cages and loaded into cargo). Just sit down and shut up. Passengers in violation of this rule would be put off the flight—immediately! If above water, I might allow them to exit with their flotation seat cushions, provided they leave a cash deposit.

*Thomas M. Sipos*
*74062.665@compuserve.com*


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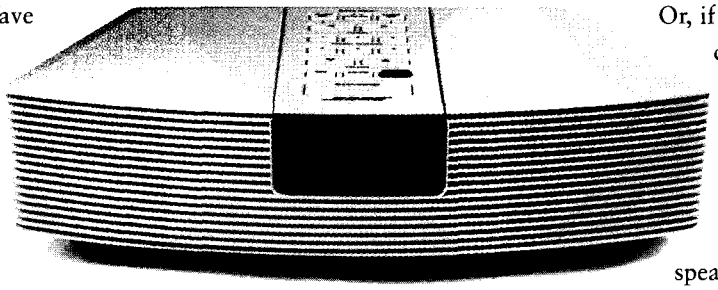

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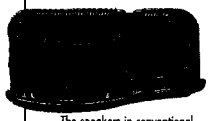

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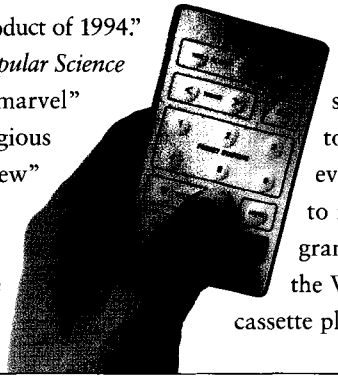

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# *FROM THE* EDITOR

## Shhh!

WHEN I first heard that Linda Tripp had secretly taped some 20 hours of conversations with Monica Lewinsky about Miss Lewinsky's alleged affair with President Clinton, I was shocked and dismayed. How could anyone talk for 20 hours about *any* relationship?

More bombshells. A source with knowledge of the tapes tells me that there are really 17 tapes of about two hours each, for a total of about *34 hours*. And Linda Tripp recently revealed that the tapes captured only a fraction of the conversations, which ran to a total of hundreds of hours!

I know Monica Lewinsky was a young groupie in distress, a 24-year-old whose idealistic illusions about having an affair with the President of the United States were shattered when a peerless Washington lawyer allegedly told her to lie about it under oath (hell hath no fury like a woman suborned). This nonetheless strikes me as the longest blabfest since *Waiting to Exhale*.

Granted, this is partly a matter of personal taste. If a conversation with one of my friends about anything personal runs much longer than 10 minutes, it's understood we're on dangerously sappy ground. But, more fundamentally, what got Monica Lewinsky in trouble is what infects our entire culture: too much talk.

Daytime television is dominated by talk shows. On radio, we talk about politics, talk about our personal problems, talk about Jesus. The locus of political commentary has migrated from op-ed pages and magazines to TV chat/shout shows, where people who have done little except talk on talk shows talk about their views.

The problem with all this is that talk is loose. It tends toward the lowest common dominator, gossip—and the more salacious the better. So our fevered national conversations tend always to be about low topics like Marv Albert's rummagings through the Victoria's Secret catalogue.

There is nothing new about gossip, of course. What's different is that it now is wired and more powerful than ever. It zings around the Internet like a speeding bullet. Cyberspace is part of the reason why the press in the Lewinsky affair adopted the standards of Aunt Maude: repeating things it didn't know to be true, but had just heard somewhere.

Gossip traditionally has had a moral aspect. You didn't sleep with your wife's two sisters, because the town gossip might find out. Today you sleep with those sisters and go on *Jenny Jones*, where, yes, the audience will condemn you, but it will also revel in the details of your sexual wrongdoing, indeed in some sense participate in it.

So we videotape the sexcapades of Frank Gifford and Dick Morris not just to hold them up to ridicule, but to savor their illicit affairs in endless broadcasts. We're lurid puritans; anything goes—any invasion of privacy, the airing of any gross detail—in our exercises of titillating moral condemnation.

Conservatives can enjoy it while this phenomenon takes a bite out of the Lecher-in-Chief, whose Gifford/Morris/Albert lifestyle provides such ready grist for the scandal mill. Of course, both Miss Lewinsky and the President would be perfect candidates as guests on a daytime show—Lewinsky: "My White House Boss Says I Dress Too Sexy"; Clinton: "How My Affair with a Nymphette Ruined My Presidency."

But be warned: our brand of puritanism will have a corrosive effect on our institutions and a coarsening effect on us. When nothing ever is left unsaid, inevitably Ted Koppel will be talking about oral sex on the air, and children won't be able to watch the nightly news. And it will only get worse.

Despite all the tawdry talk, Clinton now has approval ratings in the 70s (to get numbers that high, President Bush had to win the Gulf War). Maybe this is another sign of our national decline. Maybe it's just a temporary blip. Or maybe it's a way of telling us all to shut up.

—RICHARD LOWRY



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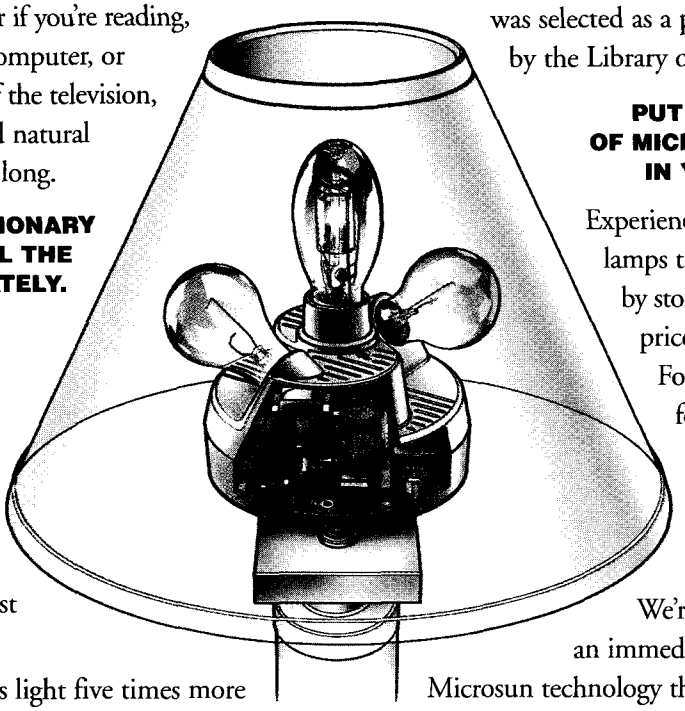

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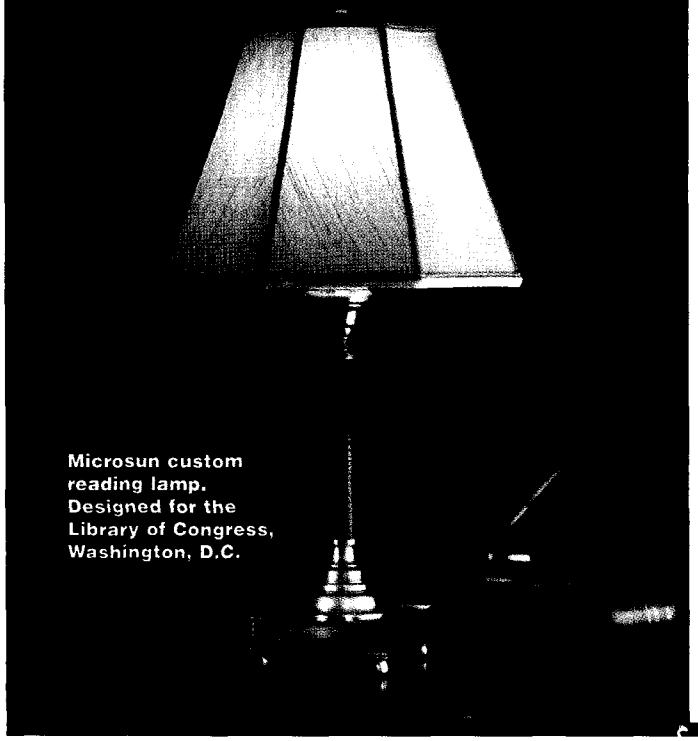

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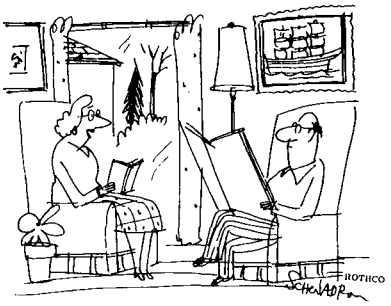
# *FOR THE* RECORD

■ While President **Clinton** denies having "sexual relations with that woman" or telling "anybody to lie. Not a single time. Never," and **Hillary Rodham Clinton** calls Independent Counsel **Kenneth Starr** "a politically motivated prosecutor who is allied with the right-wing opponents of my husband," other Democrats are not so sure. Sen. **Bob Kerrey** (D., Neb.): "You can't call the *Washington Post* a right-wing organization. It doesn't work." . . . Former Policy Advisor to the President **George Stephanopoulos**: "Has he told the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? If he has, then he will go forward and be a good President. . . . If he hasn't, he will not." White House staffers, *Washington Post* reports, call Stephanopoulos "an ABC common traitor." . . . Former press secretary **Dee Dee Myers**: "I want to believe the President." . . . Former chief of staff **Leon Panetta**, possible candidate for California governor, raises possibility of Clinton's leaving office if charges are true. . . . Sen. **Harry Reid** (D., Nev.): "If Clinton is found to have done something wrong, it's a personal wrong. It's not something the [Democratic] Party was behind." . . . Ex-Rep. **Tim Penny** (D., Minn.) calls Clinton "a womanizer" but says it's nobody's business. . . . Rep. **Joe Kennedy** (D., Mass.): "Don't react to allegations. Allegations are only that —allegations." (Something Kennedys know more about than most.) . . . Sen. **Pat Leahy** (D., Vt.) takes First Lady's line: "This is the most partisan, end-justifies-the-means investigation that I can remember in my life"—drawing rebuke from Sen. **Arlen Specter** (R., Pa.): "A serious accusation about a sting operation ought to have some authentication and verification before it is made on the floor of the United States Senate." . . . Leading contenders for Veep if **Al Gore** becomes President: Sen. **Dianne Feinstein** (D., Calif.), Rep. **Dick Gephardt** (D., Mo.).

■ Conservative Rep. **John Shimkus** (R., Ill.) calls Clinton a "lovable rogue," adds, "I have some moral indignation at the President's lifestyle. But that is not enough to move ahead with impeachment." . . . Moderate Rep. **Chris Shays** (R., Conn.): "I have to tell you that I do not believe him. But that ultimately is not the issue. That's going to be resolved in the judicial system." . . . Consultant **Frank Luntz**: "I think it is time we get some answers. The President has had enough time to respond and he hasn't." . . . **Bill Bennett**: "I do not believe this President. . . . This is the reaction of a man who I believe has something to hide." . . . Sen. **John Ashcroft** (R., Mo.): "Mr. President, if these allegations are true, you have disgraced yourself, you have disgraced the country, you have disgraced your office, and you should leave." . . . **Pete du Pont**: "Mr. President, you have become an embarrassment to us all. In the name of God, go."

■ *New York Times* columnist **Thomas Friedman** writes that "those who identified" with Clinton agenda "made a Faustian bargain. We overlooked Mr. Clinton's past indiscretions." . . . Feminist columnist **Katha Pollitt**: "I don't even care that he may have fibbed in his deposition to [**Paula**] **Jones**'s lawyers, or asked [**Monica**] **Lewinsky** to back him up, because they had no right to ask about consensual sex in the first place. . . . If I thought I'd get away with it, I'd lie too." . . . *The New Republic* editorializes that the scandal suggests need to reconsider independent-counsel and sexual-harassment laws. . . . **Michael Kelly** in *National Journal*: "[T]here isn't another shoe to drop in the discussion of the President's sex life. There's a whole closet full of pumps, slingbacks, spikes, flats, wedgies, sandals, and boots." . . . *Baton Rouge Advocate*: "The public shrugged off Watergate, too. In that case, the system, not the populace, ran a President out of office."



*"Gerald, the irrational exuberance has gone out of our marriage."*

■ Before State of the Union address, Sen. **Phil Gramm** (R., Tex.) considered not attending—but not because of scandal: ". . . the Democrats jump up and applaud the most absurd statements. And then you sort of feel like you have to applaud something you are not for, or you got to look like a sort of sourpuss, poor sport." He went. . . . *National Journal*'s **Thomas Galvin** quotes Rep. **Gary Ackerman** (D., N.Y.), in reply to question whether GOPers would boycott State of the Union: "The three Republicans who won't be there are the ones who never got any [oral sex] their whole life." Adds Galvin, "Yup, he really said it." . . . Stephanopoulos's review of speech: "What struck me most was the President didn't seem to be enjoying himself." . . . **Chris Matthews** on *Rivera Live* chooses words infelicitously: "He went after women like gang-busters. . . . He hit women every single way tonight."

■ Foreign press reaction falls into several categories. Amusement: "Naughtygate!" (UK's *Daily Star*), "President Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" (Germany's *Die Tageszeitung*), "A Loose Presidential Zipper" (UK's *Guardian*). . . . Ridicule: "The most powerful man in the world will have to discuss his sex life while **Saddam Hussein** is mobilizing Iraq" (Holland's *NRC Handelsblad*). . . . Scorn: "An inexplicable weakness of character" (Italy's *Corriere della Sera*), "not compatible with a well-functioning democracy" (Denmark's *Politiken*). . . . Weird sympathy: "Impeachment for Love" (Russia's *Segodnya*). . . . Puzzlement: "a lot of noise for a few illicit frolics." (France's *Libération*). . . . Paranoid: "A Zionist Plot" (**Sheik Ahmed Yassin** of Hamas, quoted by numerous Arab dailies).

■ Media Research Council president **Brent Bozell** identifies leader of vast right-wing conspiracy against Clinton: **Jay Leno**. Among Leno's attacks: "**Mike McCurry** . . . said today the President denies ever having an affair with this woman and he is going about his normal daily routine. Denying having an affair with a woman pretty much *is* Clinton's normal daily routine."



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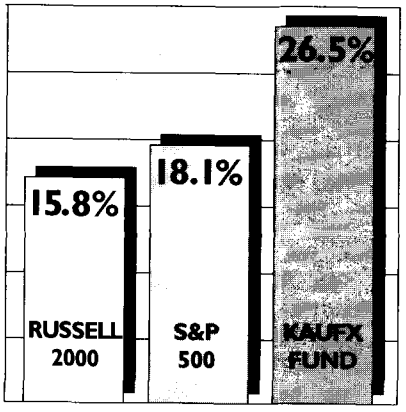


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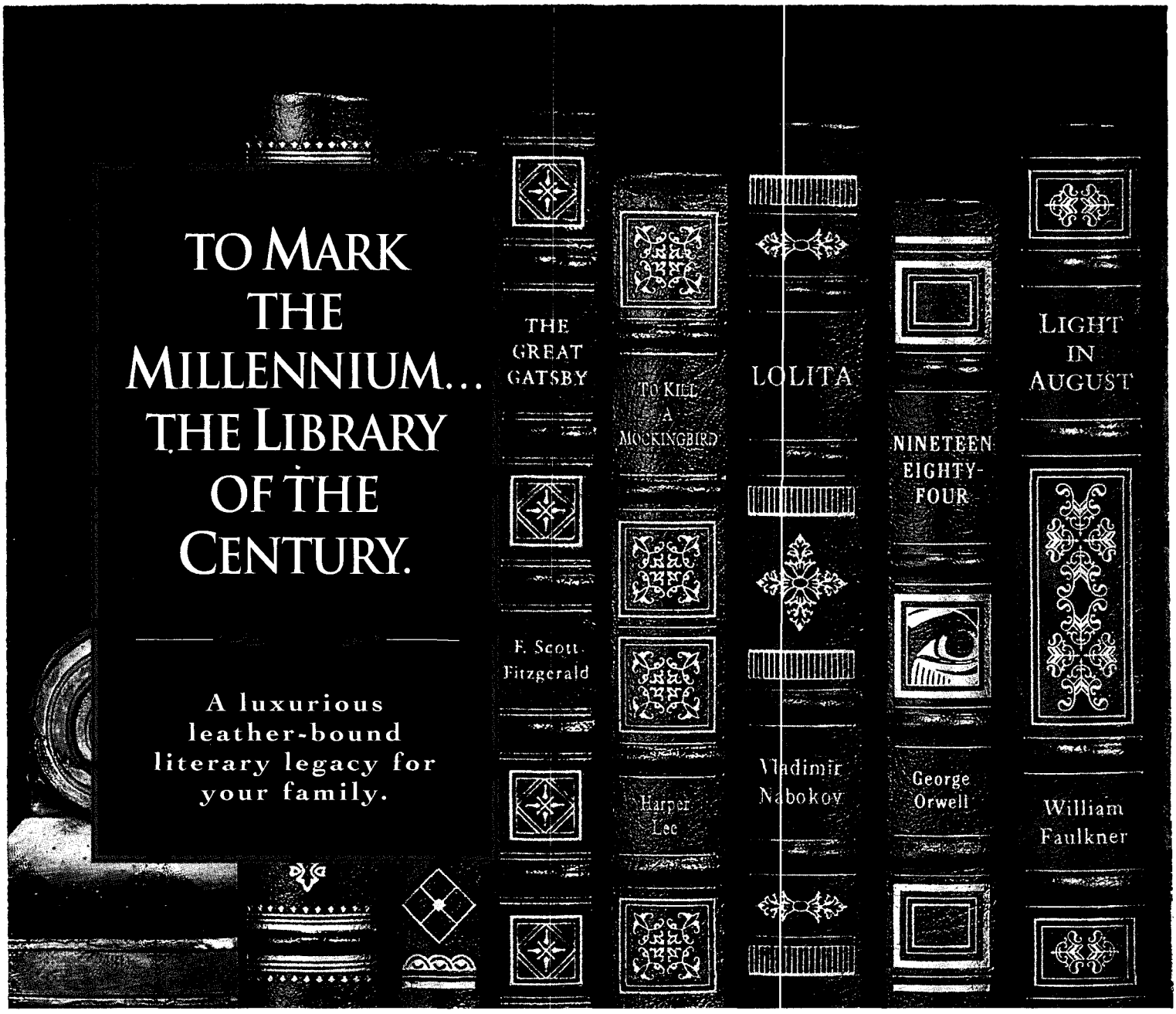


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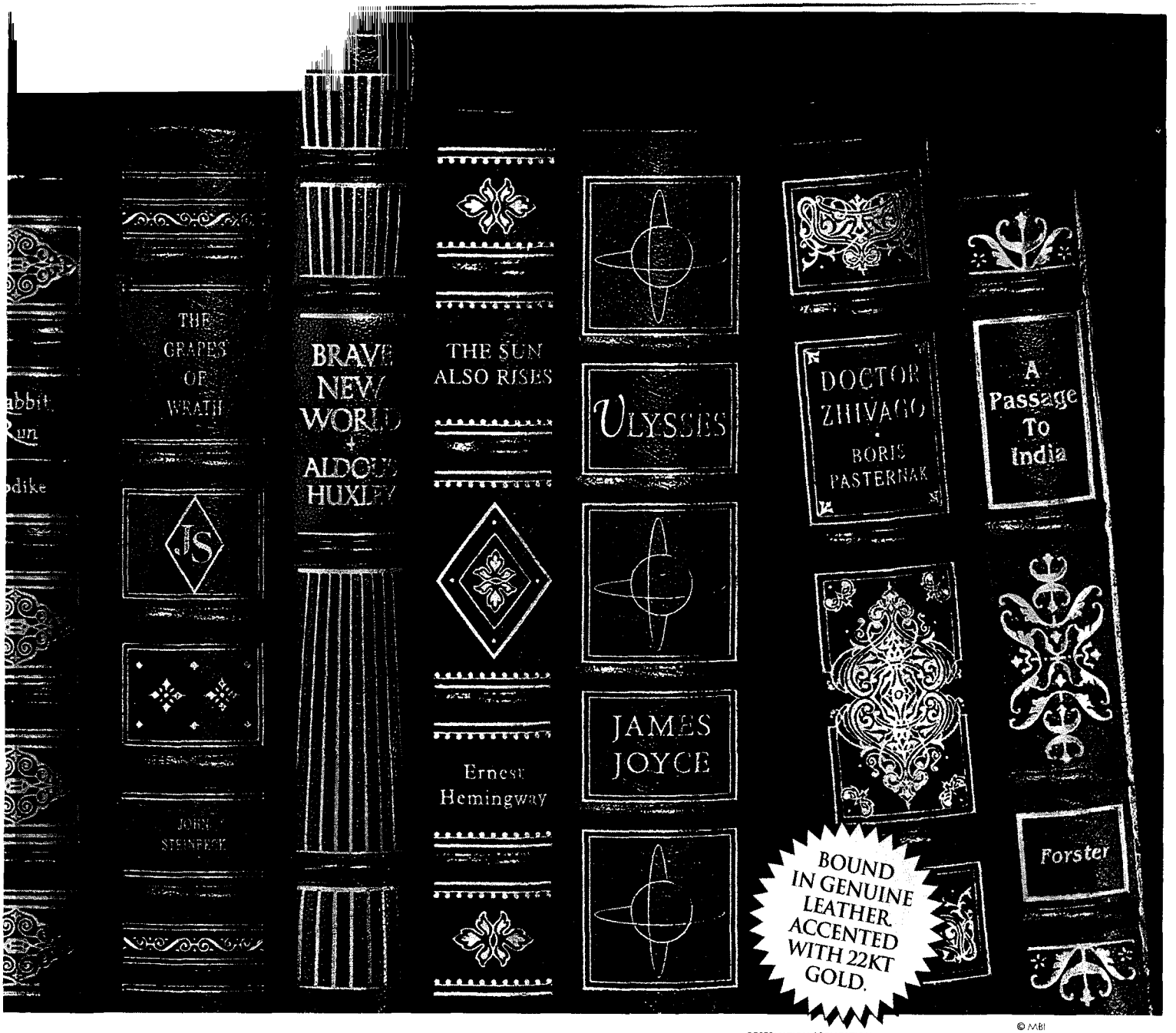


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# THE TOP 20 REASONS BILL CLINTON WILL ATTEND NR'S BERMUDA CRUISE

**20. U.S. HAS NO EXTRADITION TREATY WITH BERMUDA** Or so the Mari from Hope hopes ("Secretary Albright, look into whether ..."). Fact is, Bermuda is *so* beautiful it takes handcuffs to get some people *out*. To get *in*, however, it only takes Celebrity Cruises' MV *Zenith*, the spectacular setting for the **National Review 1998 Bermuda Cruise**. Mark your calendars: our 7 days and nights of conservative revelry will take place May 23rd through May 30th.

**19. WANTS MORE EXPERIENCE IN "FOREIGN RELATIONS"** "Hey dahlin', how's about an *entente cordiale*?"

**18. MUST BEGIN SEARCH FOR THE *REAL* ADULTERER** Maybe O.J. can help. Anyway, why don't *you* search for something in Bermuda, like turquoise waters, purple-flowered pawpaw trees, yellow-feathered kiskadee birds, pastel cottages painted lilac, lemon, and lime, pink sands on Warwick Long Bay, secluded beaches and hideaway coves throughout the island, neighborhood pubs, "bobbies," town criers, and regimental guards in full regalia, cricket games, and afternoon teas. There's so much to see and do on this island paradise.

**17. ADDRESSING WHITE HOUSE INTERN ALUMNI REUNION IN HAMILTON** So many volunteers, so little time.

**16. "I JUS' LUV CRUISIN'"** Unfortunately—or *fortunately*—Mr. President, the *Zenith* does not have astroturf "in the back." Nor does it "drag" down Main Street. But we're sure you'll enjoy this rather-more-upscale type of cruising.

**15. TICKET WAS SURPRISE GIFT FROM TIPPER** It gives her the opportunity to measure for new curtains at the White House.

**14. BELIEVES SIXTH COMMANDMENT DOESN'T APPLY AT SEA** Ditto for the Ninth!!

**13. WILL ASK BOB BORK FOR TIPS ON FIRING SPECIAL PROSECUTORS** Fat chance: expect the Good Judge to be enjoying the company, and answering the questions, of *National Review* subscribers. The **National Review 1998 Bermuda Cruise** is their—and your—special opportunity to meet **Judge Bork**, as well as **Dinesh D'Souza**, **Ward Connerly**, **Mona Charen**, **Norman Podhoretz**, **Midge Decter**, **John Leo**, **Brent Bozell**, **William Rusher**, and *NR*'s **Rich Lowry**, **Kate O'Berine**, and **John O'Sullivan**.

**12. OOPS! THINKS "LIDO" DECK IS REALLY "LIBIDO" DECK** What'll he think about the *Zenith*'s "Fantasy" Deck?!

**11. HEARD SHIP CAPTAIN CAN DIVORCE AS WELL AS MARRY** Now that the Nevada fundraiser's been cancelled . . .

**10. WANTS TO CHECK OUT "VIRGIN" BEACHES** "Someone's got to help those poor young girls with the suntan lotion, no?"

**9. EVEN BRENT BOZELL WILL BE FRIENDLIER COMPANY THAN HILLARY** No knock on Brent—he's a *great* guy. And unlike a certain Health Care Czarina, if he disagrees with you, he'll never throw a lamp at you. The **National Review 1998 Bermuda Cruise** is your special opportunity to hear Brent, our other special guests, and *NR*'s editors discuss the two hottest topics—not related to the President's extracurricular activities—in America: media bias and political correctness.

**8. NEW MICKEY DEES OPENING IN ST. GEORGE** Jog to the Golden Arches with the First Customer. Join him in scarfing down an Egg McWhatever. And then another. And another. And one for the jog back. *Now* you're livin'!

**7. CHANCE TO INFILTRATE "RIGHT WING" CONSPIRATORS** Come on the cruise and you will become an official schemer, complete with your own FBI file that will be leaked to the White House as per Mrs. You-Know-Who's orders.

**6. PLANS TO INHALE ONCE OUTSIDE 3-MILE LIMIT** The **National Review 1998 Bermuda Cruise** will feature classic H. Upmann cigars, and top-shelf cognac, at two glorious late-night poolside smokers. What a *très* cool way to commence the wee hours.

**5. CASINO GIVES BETTER ODDS THAN STARR** The *Zenith*'s Mayfair Casino features one-armed bandits, Black Jack, and roulette—it's all here for you (and Lady Luck) to enjoy. (Sorry, but the Cattle Futures table will not be operating during the *NR* cruise.)

**4. LOVED *TITANIC*: WANTS TO STAND ON DECK PLAYING PLAY SAX IN CASE OF ICEBERG** Yes, we know, we've just violated the *cardinal* rule of cruise marketing: *DON'T MENTION THE TITANIC!* But heck: we'll use this opportunity to inform you that the *Zenith* is a spectacular ship, ultramodern, and gushingly praised ("exotic," "graceful," etc.) by every cruise guide published. As for icebergs, the only ones you'll ever see are the teeny tiny ones in your cocktail glass!

**3. PLAYED VARSITY SHUFFLEBOARD AT OXFORD** (No stick jokes, please.)

**2. CHANCE TO DUMP SUBPOENAED PAPERS IN BERMUDA TRIANGLE** "Documents? What documents?"

**1. DID SOMEONE SAY "MIDNIGHT BUFFET"?!** Yes Bubba, you can eat by the pound, round the clock. It's hard *not* to: gourmets and fellow gourmands will revel in the *Zenith*'s cuisine—it's fantastic, it's endless, and it's without doubt the best grub afloat.

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# THE WEEK

■ President Clinton vows to spend the remainder of his term searching for the *real* adulterer.

■ For the first time since World War II, the Leader of the Free World did not give the State of the Union address. He was on his way home from Cuba.

■ Rep. Charlie Norwood (R., Ga.) has proposed new health-insurance regulations to stop HMO abuses. His bill would force insurers to issue policies to anyone regardless of health, and to charge the same rate regardless of age. States that have enacted these measures, like Massachusetts, have seen insurance premiums quadruple (people just wait until they are old or sick to buy coverage). Rep. Norwood's bill would surely lead millions of Americans, especially the young, to drop their coverage —making the next push for national health care that much easier. And so it is odd that a number of conservatives are co-sponsoring the bill. Majority Leader Dick Armey, who opposes the bill, has been pointing out the pitfalls of Washington's brand of "anecdotal medicine": for instance, Congress banned "gag clauses" that kept doctors from informing patients of all their options, only to learn from the General Accounting Office that no such clauses exist. Armey may win this tussle, since the rest of the House leadership backs him. But ultimately both Norwood and Armey make the same error: they think that the dominance of HMOs results from market forces. One would regulate those forces; the other defends the HMOs. They should instead unite to change the tax bias that makes other forms of medical provision so difficult to sustain.

■ Oh, the innocent days, when Clinton scandals only involved large-scale money-laundering operations, possibly in the service of hostile foreign governments. When longtime Clinton friend Charlie Trie gave himself up to federal authorities—following his indictment for, among other things, conspiracy to defraud the Federal Election Commission and the Democratic National Committee, wire fraud, mail fraud, conspiracy to obstruct justice, witness tampering, and obstruction of a congressional investigation—it was a nostalgic reminder of last year's scandal. So was the grilling that Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt received from a House panel about possible improper influence in a decision by his department to reject a Wisconsin casino project. These developments underscore how important it is for the President to get back to the work of his Administration, which is creating a new ethical imbroglio more sensational and attention-grabbing than the last.

■ A bomb at an abortion clinic in Birmingham, Alabama, killed a security guard and injured an employee. The right-to-life cause is not invalidated by fringe acts of violence any more than the cause of overturning Jim Crow was retroactively invalidated by the activities of the Black Panthers. But are the pro-life movement and the violent fringe—Paul Hill, John Salvi, whoever is guilty in Birmingham—somehow linked? David Lackey, Alabama director of Operation Rescue, told the *Washington Post*, "We've been out here ten years on a daily basis. . . . We require a non-violence pledge, always have. It doesn't help what we are trying to accomplish." So who makes the connection? The wild men do, in their own minds. But doesn't the mainstream pro-abortion media have a role in encouraging the linkage? The *Post* ran Lackey's disclaimer on page 6, in paragraph 23 of its story.

■ Among a multitude of left-lurching programs unveiled in the Clinton budget, none is worse than the national cigarette tax. Reduced smoking may be a desirable goal, but tax hikes to finance bigger government are not. Thirty years ago in New York City, Major John Lindsey's young finance commissioner, Roy Goodman, imposed a steep cigarette-tax hike. But black-market imports from the South enabled smokers to evade the new tax. Tax revenues to support social-spending increases never materialized, and the budget went deeper into the red. A federal cigarette tax would also be the first national sales tax apart from the tax on gas, which has been carefully earmarked for the highway and transportation trust funds since the Eisenhower era. The cigarette tax would set a precedent of imposing federal sales taxes on top of an already burdensome federal income tax. Of the 22 major developed

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## *From Your Weatherman*

*The little cloud that grew from hand size*
*Until it looms above, big-band size,*
*Engorges moisture as the porters*
*Slam windows in the family quarters,*
*While in the West Wing, lawyers huddle*
*As raindrops hit the panes, then puddle.*

—W. H. VON DREELE

nations, the U.S. has the lowest tax burden, according to a recent study by Cato's Steve Moore, despite the fact that our corporate, estate, and savings tax rates are all well above average. The saving grace? The U.S. is one of the few industrial nations left without a VAT or a national sales tax on top of the income tax. This is one reason why our unemployment is below 5 per cent, while Europe's is over 10 per cent. Let's not follow them down that road. President Clinton is blowing smoke at Congress. It should not inhale.

■ While proposing $50 billion worth of new federal programs in his State of the Union address, President Clinton also credited Al Gore with downsizing the Federal Government by some 300,000 workers. Left unsaid was that almost two-thirds of these cuts were in the Department of Defense. That is in addition to the more than 400,000 uniformed personnel let go in the past four years. Mr. Clinton's boast had a hollow ring—to match our hollow military.

■ Before there was Sara Lister (Assistant Secretary of the Army until she resigned in the wake of her comments about the Marine Corps) there was Barbara Pope (Assistant Secretary of the Navy in the Bush Administration). Mrs. Pope explained her mission thus: "We are in the process of weeding out the white male norm. We're about changing the culture." She threatened a high-profile resignation if enough heads didn't roll after Tailhook. Her interference in the investigation of that incident is largely responsible for the bungled results—guilty parties went unpunished while innocent Navy fliers had their careers destroyed (see "The Tailhook Scandals," *NR*, March 7, 1994). Nonetheless, the House National Security Committee has just appointed Mrs. Pope to a commission charged with studying co-ed basic training and other issues regarding women in the military; the commission will also include a feminist sociologist. Another commission, headed by former Sen. Nancy Kassebaum Baker, recently concluded that the experiment with co-ed basic training had failed, but the GOP Congress's own commission can now be expected to contradict this commonsense conclusion. Unless Sens. Strom Thurmond (R., S.C.) and Dirk Kempthorne (R., Idaho) counter the feminist slant of the House committee's appointees with their own choices, the spirit of Sara Lister will go marching on.

■ President Clinton proposed to restore the availability of food stamps to legally resident aliens—a benefit cut by the 1996 welfare bill. Heartened by the development, Frank Sharry, director of the National Immigration Forum, said that Americans feel "less threatened" by immigration and "more comfortable with the diversity it brings." Don't get too comfortable: perverse incentives will ensure that immigrants have improvidence in common. President Clinton seems to desire the worst of all possible worlds: open borders, with an open bar.

■ A minor theme of the press coverage of the Pope's visit to Cuba—at least, of that coverage which did not posit moral or intellectual equivalence between him and Castro—was that we should not expect a reprise of his role in the liberation of Poland. The Catholic Church has a smaller political presence in Cuba; it lacks the necessary infrastructure to bring down a regime. What secularist analyses overlook is that the Church most effectively subverts tyranny when it is most itself: when it reminds a people that there is Someone before Whom all pretensions to worldly power are risible. The press may not be able to count the Pope's divisions, but Castro is surely already feeling their force.

■ On February 1, on her swing through the Mideast, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright scolded Israeli and Palestinian leaders for the impasse in the peace diplomacy. She was "sick and tired" of their intransigence, U.S. officials leaked to the media in Jerusalem. "There is far too much at stake for this to go on," she declared publicly. At least she was even-handed, in contrast to earlier statements of hers putting most of the blame on Israel. But the public tantrum is a symptom of the breakdown of the Administration's policy. Trying to force a Likud prime minister to behave as if he were a Labor prime minister is not a smart strategy. Secretary Albright should be taking advantage of Benjamin Netanyahu's willingness to move directly to negotiations on the ultimate issues (Palestinian sovereignty, final borders, Jerusalem, etc.) instead of remaining bogged down in interim issues left over from Oslo. More peace, less process.

■ In Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall*, the reunions of the Bollinger Club of Scone College are periodically banned because club members get drunk, trash rooms, and break windows. In the fantasy of real life, the Party of the Right of the Yale Political Union was forced to move its post-banquet party from a college common room because the dean caught members . . . smoking. Smoking *cigarettes*. Said one disgruntled alum, "If we'd been having a gay orgy, we would have been all right."

■ The California Assembly has already voted to repeal


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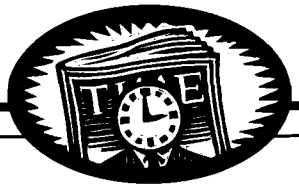

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## *Trying to Act Normal*

*Al Gore clapped like a man possessed;*
*Newt Gingrich rarely rose.*
*Outside, a bomb ticked noisily,*
*But inside, no one froze.*
*Though Dali would have understood,*
*The scene was so surreal,*
*The President began to sound*
*Like Norman Vincent Peale.*

—W. H. von Dreele

the ban on smoking in taverns, heeding the complaints of outraged drinkers and bartenders from Chula Vista to Eureka. In Orange County, one chain of taverns posted defiant "Smoking Permitted" signs. In Humboldt County, bar owners took revenge against the state by unplugging their Lotto machines. When a police officer in Clovis warned a tavern keeper that he'd better stop his customers from lighting up, the patrons put out a jar to collect money for the impending fine. The *Los Angeles Times* called enforcement of the smoking ban "hit-or-miss at best, chaotic at worst." But tobacco's opponents, who are counting on the state Senate to block repeal, preferred to see the ashtray as half empty. "We know there's a lot of compliance," said one, as the ill-considered ban threatens to go up in smoke.

■ A thousand or so middle-class white kids in Utah have gotten themselves rather worked up about animal rights. They're renegades in a national gang of skinheads, the "Straight Edgers," whose emphasis is on rallying against animal abuse, drugs, and alcohol. The Utah branch goes a bit further: its activities range from beating up kids who make fun of animal rights with brass knuckles and baseball bats, to bombings and arson attacks on furriers and hamburger joints. According to cops, the Straight Edgers vandalized a yogurt stand (its offense: selling dairy products) and have been known to harass, even stab, kids who drink booze or smoke pot at punk-rock concerts. A *Los Angeles Times* article quotes one mother as "tearfully recalling" the descent of her Straight Edge sons from vegetarians to vegans to "animal-rights activists obsessed by videos with militant messages," and Europeans think our sex scandals are weird.

■ Legislation passed under George Bush has come back to haunt the former President's favorite game. Professional golfer Casey Martin, who suffers a rare circulatory disorder in one leg, is suing the PGA Tour under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Martin claims he cannot walk long distances and is demanding the right to use an electric cart—forbidden under Tour rules on the common-sense assumption that the stamina required to walk 18 in the heat is part of the game. But when the nanny state is involved, the little guy's anecdote usually wins out. Nike is even exploiting populist sentiment with pro-Martin commercials. Yet the logical outcome of Martin's suit would be to reduce the athleticism of the game, as healthy players seeking a competitive advantage stop walking. Which wouldn't leave much reason to endorse those Nike shoes, would it?

■ The *New York Times* asked Dr. Harold Koplewicz, director of New York University's Child Study Center, how to discuss the Clinton scandal with children. "Children 8 to 12 years old are the most rigid, rule-driven group. 'They want to know, Did he do it or didn't he?' Dr. Koplewicz said . . . 'One 9-year-old was told the President was accused of having a girlfriend, besides the woman he is married to, and the kid just said, "Didn't he do that already once before?"' " Doc, these kids don't need a village; they sound as if they've been raised just fine.

■ Here is a complete report on everything that happened last week that did not have to do with the Lewinsky affair: .

■ *The scene:* A smoky bar. *The characters:* He and she. *Old line:* "My wife doesn't understand me." *New line:* "I'm the victim of a right-wing conspiracy."

# Public Affairs

HOW quickly the weather of the news changes. Since *NR*'s last issue, we have had storm, then calm. President Clinton has gone from being on his way out to being in the clear.

Wait a while, and it will change again. When Sen. James Buckley called in March 1974 for President Nixon to step down (see p. 42), he mostly met with Republican denunciations. But Nixon went five months later. The Clinton Affair, which now seems quiescent, is composed of four elements, all grave, all with long shelf lives, all reinforcing one another. If the President does not leave office early, the remainder of his term will resemble Hobbes's state of nature—poor, nasty, brutish, but long.

The first element is lawbreaking. The prima-facie case that President Clinton and Monica Lewinsky had an affair, and that he encouraged her to lie about it, is strong. If there was no affair, why did meet with her, exchange gifts, call her on the phone? Presidents never have such interactions with junior staffers, much less interns. If there was an affair, would he have told her to be frank about it? Now these questions have fallen into the unsparing hands of lawyers; the law is like a machine—dumb, but tireless.

The second element is the sex itself. For two weeks,


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Americans have been discussing the semiotics of oral sex—talk hitherto reserved for Ivy League English departments. Subtract the white trash and Valley Girl elements, and the situation is straight out of *Rigoletto*, or Homer's Olympus—the man of power dallies, and moves on. Rifling through the FBI files of political opponents and selling access to foreign powers are objectively more serious offenses, but the attraction of a sex story, and the repulsion it excites, are stronger, and unlikely to fade.

The third element is imprudence. Bill Clinton had been caught sneaking through this territory before. It was posted. "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly." Do we want a man this foolish to be making decisions in matters of life and death? When hot-spots like Iraq boost this question from the hypothetical to the actual, it will become painfully acute.

The fourth, and possibly the most disturbing, element is lying. Anything President Clinton could have said—*I did it and I repent*; *I did it and I make restitution*; *Publish and be damned*; *Love is free*—would have been better than what he and his handlers have offered: the absurd logic-chopping, the lashing out, the silence. Lying is this Administration's default mode, but the grossness of these deceptions will inflame all its future lies, even as it retroactively highlights all its past lies.

Should President Clinton go? Of course. Even one or two of these reasons might be sufficient. All four together are damning. He is a disgrace to himself, his office, and his country.

Will he go? Not willingly. Stubbornness and zealous allies have saved him in every other crisis; why not in this one? His very vices armor him against shame. Will Congress impeach and convict him? So far, Republican leaders have mostly been circumspect about the scandal in public. Partly their silence reflects a calculation—cynical, irresponsible, and probably mistaken—that they are bet-

# A Documentary Not to Be Missed

ON the evenings of February 23 and 24, at 9 P.M., PBS will air a four-and-a-half-hour documentary on Ronald Reagan, as part of its series entitled *The American Experience*. Neither a puff piece nor a smear job, this long and thoughtful look at the man and his Administration is the first serious television biography of our 40th President, and is likely to dominate its field for years to come.

Part I, entitled "The Lifeguard," traces Reagan's early years, including the six summers during which he rescued 77 people while serving as a lifeguard on a local river. After working as a sportscaster at a Des Moines radio station, he went to Hollywood in 1937, and in the next 25 years made more than fifty films—only once portraying a villain.

It was in Hollywood, as president of the Screen Actors' Guild, that Reagan first locked horns with the Communists and developed his lifelong hostility to Communism. As his film career passed its peak in the 1950s, he turned to making speeches for General Electric on free-enterprise topics, and in 1964, after many years as a Democrat, he proclaimed his conversion to Republicanism by endorsing Barry Goldwater.

The documentary describes all these events and many more, using interviews with an astonishing array of people who knew Reagan in the relevant years. Nancy Reagan appears, in her first on-camera interview since she and her husband left the White House. Edmund Morris, the President's official biographer, offers wonderfully measured and perceptive insights into the man. But perhaps the most surprising and heartwarming interviews are those with three of his four children. Reagan's son Ron, above all, offers a superbly balanced picture of his father, by no means uncritical yet steadfastly affectionate.

But it is of course the story of Reagan's presidential Administration, entitled "An American Crusade," that commands the lion's share of the attention. Here again the interviews with actors in the drama—George Shultz, Edwin Meese, Mikhail Gorbachev, Howard Baker, and many more—add enormous impact to the story; and there are also frequent comments by journalists, some friendly and some not so friendly, who observed it.

Every major event is described: among them the assassination attempt, the recession of 1982, the Left's 1983 drive for a nuclear freeze (which Reagan countered by deploying intermediate-range missiles in Europe), Reagan's insistence on the fundamental "evil" of Communism and his "remoralization" of American foreign policy, the determination to save our seven hostages in Lebanon (which dragged Reagan into the "arms-for-hostages" morass), his resolute refusal to abandon the Strategic Defense Initiative despite the pleas of Gorbachev, with whom he agreed on so much else, and his triumphant visit to Moscow in May 1988.

If there is a villain in the piece, it is Donald Regan, who succeeded Jim Baker as the President's chief of staff and was in turn replaced by Howard Baker. Several players in the drama charge that Regan isolated the President, the better to play prime minister.

When the documentary follows Ronald Reagan into the shadows of Alzheimer's disease, I will confess that I wept. In Edmund Morris's characteristically precise words, "He left his conscious life . . . He simply stopped."

Austin Hoyt of Boston's WGBH, who produced this wonderful account along with Adriana Bosch, has accomplished a minor miracle. Seldom has television probed deeper or seen further—and all without either adulation or rancor. History is in his debt.

—WILLIAM A. RUSHER



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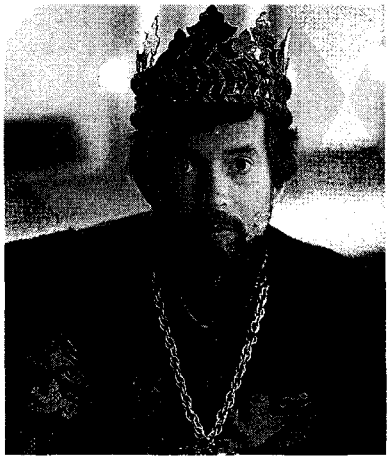

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ter off under a weakened Clinton than a honeymooning Al Gore. But it also reflects a sober-minded caution and a realism about their power to affect the current course of the scandal. After a time, however, their silence will be taken as an implicit endorsement of the widespread view that Clinton's "private" corruption does not matter—and the public, loath to contemplate drastic steps like removing a President, will follow their lead.

What the GOP should avoid saying is that we do not have enough facts, should not rush to judgment, must presume innocence—dodges that make those who mouth them complicit in the Clintons' dishonesty. Republican leaders should say that the allegations are serious and credible and that they will withhold more extensive comment because the stakes are so high, and because they may eventually have to sit in impeachment hearings. They are, and they may.

## Starr Wars

IF there is a silver lining to this sordid tale, it is that it may well lead to a reconsideration of two misbegotten policies: the expansion of sexual-harassment law and the independent counsel—both of them created and long cheered by liberals, including the Clintons and some of their current defenders. But the reconsideration may take place on the wrong grounds. It is true, for instance, that President Clinton's trysts with Miss Lewinsky would never have become a legal issue without current sexual-harassment doctrine. But the law did not force the President to lie or his associates to attempt to conceal the truth. That behavior, and not the Supreme Court's holding last year which allowed the Paula Jones case to proceed, is what is interfering with the President's ability to perform his duties. In using this defense, liberals are going soft on crimes they invented.

The demerits of the independent-counsel law, aside from its dubious constitutionality, are two: the office it creates answers mostly to itself and is thus prone to abuse, and it substitutes criminal prosecution for political responsibility. Its newfound critics, silent when hapless Reagan and Bush appointees supplied its victims, almost all ignore the second problem and contend that Kenneth Starr's conduct illustrates the first—or, in the case of journalist Al Hunt, that Starr has misbehaved but the law itself is fine.

In fact, Starr has done a bad job well. His most unsavory action, the wiring of Linda Tripp to gather information from Miss Lewinsky, is standard prosecutorial practice. Perhaps those practices should change, but it would have been negligent of Starr to forswear such tactics in advance of any change.

More ludicrous is the First Lady's charge that Starr is part of a "vast right-wing conspiracy" against her husband. Conservatives do indeed conspire—etymologically, "breathe together." They take conservative positions and associate with other conservatives to achieve conservative goals. If that makes the Federalist Society a conspiracy, it also makes the American Bar Association one—a considerably more successful one, alas. The public listens respectfully to Mrs. Clinton's wild and unsubstantiated claims because she subtly exploits sympathy for a wronged wife. The sympathy is misguided: she maintains willingly a corrupt arrangement with her co-conspirator, and she has the additional motive that Starr is charged with investigating her too.

Finally, Starr is accused of wasting years and millions of taxpayer dollars in his investigation. One reason for the time and expense, as also for the investigation's wide range, is that Attorney General Janet Reno has repeatedly expanded Starr's mandate, without any request from him, to cover the Travel Office firings, the collection of FBI files on Republicans, and the case of former White House legal counsel Bernard Nussbaum. The bigger reason is the Administration's stonewalling: it has taken extensive litigation, for instance, to knock down bogus claims of executive privilege and lawyer–client privilege.

The political campaign against Starr, orchestrated by the White House and the Democratic National Committee, is a perfect example of the second defect of the counsel statute. President Clinton can order Janet Reno to fire Kenneth Starr at any time if he really believes the charges of bias and misconduct he and his wife have made against Starr. But the independent counsel is useful to him: he can launch an attack against Starr that he could never launch against a special prosecutor reporting to Miss Reno. The attack is cynical through and through. It is also, arguably, illegal under 18 USC Sec. 1503, which states, in part: "Whoever corruptly, or by threats or force, or by any threatening letter or communication, endeavors to influence, intimidate, or impede any . . . officer in or of any court of the United States" or "the due administration of justice, shall be punished" by prison, fine, or both.

## Judgment Day

IN the film *Wag the Dog*, a President is caught molesting a 14-year-old, and his spin doctors cook up a fake war to distract attention. In the present circumstances there are undoubtedly those who will dismiss President Clinton's preparations for a military blow against Iraq as just such a stunt. In fact, it is high time the President acted forcefully against Saddam Hussein, and if and when he does, Republicans should back him. Every indication is that they will.

The timing of this unusual show of Clinton fortitude has less to do with scandal than with the conclusion in late January of Ambassador Richard Butler, the Australian head of the UN inspection team, that Saddam was determined to evade UN Security Council resolutions that require him to renounce weapons of mass destruction.



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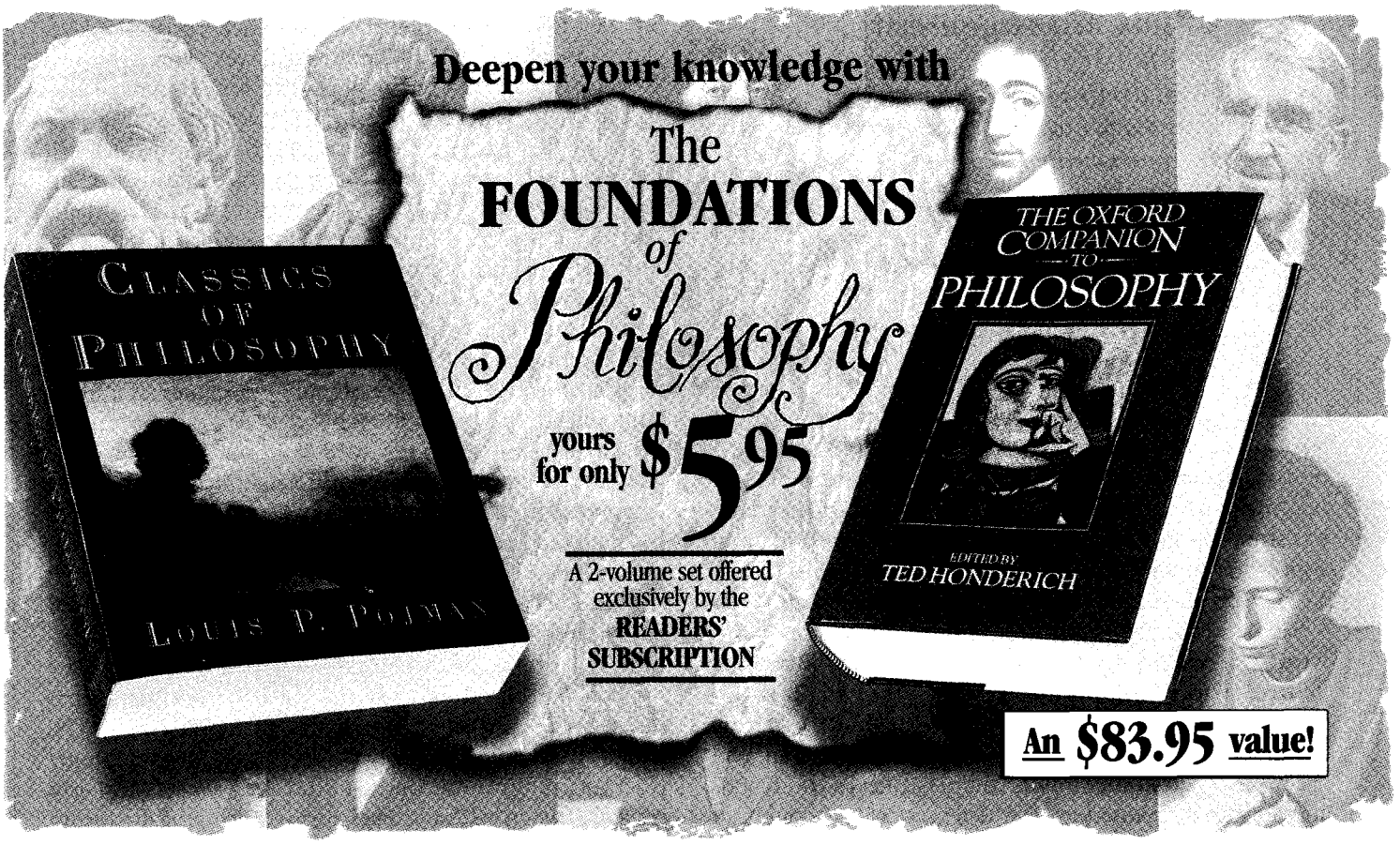


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*And daily logs look hairy,*
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*To feed the files to Buddy,*
*Then straightens up the study.*

—W. H. von Dreele

Since October 29, Saddam has stymied UN inspectors by one maneuver after another. Butler, to his great credit, has stood his ground. He now openly accuses Saddam of concealing missiles and warheads and the manufacture of VX poison chemicals and anthrax biological agents.

Saddam must be stopped. The Administration, at this writing, is dismissing Russian and French diplomatic maneuvers as the pro-Iraq obstructionism they are. It is also considering a days-long bombing campaign to destroy chemical and biological facilities (assuming we can find them), as well as other military targets such as command-and-control headquarters, air defenses, and Republican Guard assets. The Pentagon vows that there will be no more pinpricks, but a blow that inflicts real harm.

Good as far as it goes. But it is not enough merely to cripple Saddam's warmaking power. Any bombing must be part of a strategy to bring down the Ba'athist regime. As many conservative worthies (including Jeane Kirkpatrick, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, William Bennett, Vin Weber, Bill Kristol, and *NR* Senior Editor Peter Rodman) have been urging, it is time to recognize an Iraqi government in exile, arm it, turn over to it the $1.6 billion in blocked Iraqi assets, and help it establish itself in the north and south of the country—while we build up a contingency force of American ground troops.

Just as Saddam has run out of excuses, so have we.

## Bodies Politic

THERE remains the question of what the Clinton Affair says about us. The early polling data are neatly split. President Clinton's job-approval ratings went through the ceiling after the State of the Union address, while responses to other questions suggest disapproval if he was carrying on, and a disposition to believe that he was.

Sensible people are willing to cut otherwise able men and women a certain amount of slack. During World War II, Gen. Dwight Eisenhower told Gen. Omar Bradley that he was in love with his driver, Kay Summersby. Gen. Bradley told Ike to soldier on. But such transactions require discretion and a measure of, yes, hypocrisy. La Rochefoucauld's line, that hypocrisy is the homage that vice pays to virtue, is usually read nowadays as a joke about virtue, but it is also a tribute to it: virtue, in most circumstances, rules, and is seen to rule. President Clinton, as his behavior makes plain, cannot pay that homage. As this fact sinks in, his poll numbers—approving his performance, while disdaining his conduct—will collide.

There has been huffing and puffing, from Europeans, liberals, and other sophisticates, about American puritanism. It has been ever so. In the first American political sex scandal, former Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton felt obliged to confess that he was an adulterer and a blackmail victim, in order to defend himself against the charge that he and the blackmailer had been involved in corrupt speculation. Hamilton's friend Talleyrand must have shaken his head at the sexual fuss. But then, Talleyrand would also have been a corrupt speculator.

The media distort this, as they distort every facet of American life. Hurricane Monica was like a national daytime talk show. Such shows—*Jerry Springer*, *Sally Jessy Raphael*—are lurid and smutty. Teenage hookers, bigamists, and other moral freaks are the usual guests. The audience reactions, however, are often encouragingly reactionary. When the onstage stud says, *Shore I cheat own my wife*, the crowd says, *Boo!* But is this the right forum for moral judgment? The media, from the Internet to Ted Koppel, are like a bear-baiting pit. Grant all of Monica Lewinsky's vices—but her life is over, unless (even worse) she gets a book deal. The President and the First Lady are not to be pitied; their daughter is. So are we, for we too are part of the show.

## Security Deposit

THE President's State of the Union pledge to "save Social Security first" by "reserving" 100 per cent of the so-called Trust Fund surplus is nothing more than a poorly baited trap to block Republican tax cuts. Social Security is a pay-as-you-go transfer system, not a pension investment fund. By law, any surplus revenues can be invested only in U.S. Treasury securities. Not stocks, or corporate bonds, or mutual funds, or 401(k)s, or IRAs, or bank CDs. Only Treasury debt instruments. In practice, Social Security officials exchange surplus revenues averaging about $80 billion per year (after paying out monthly benefits) for Treasury notes with an average maturity of four years. The Treasury Department then deposits the proceeds into its pot of general revenues, which are used to pay the Federal Government's bills for defense, entitlements, social programs, interest on the debt, and so on.

In other words, the payroll taxes of working Americans are not saved up in a special account to pay their eventual retirement benefits. Instead, they are used to pay bene-



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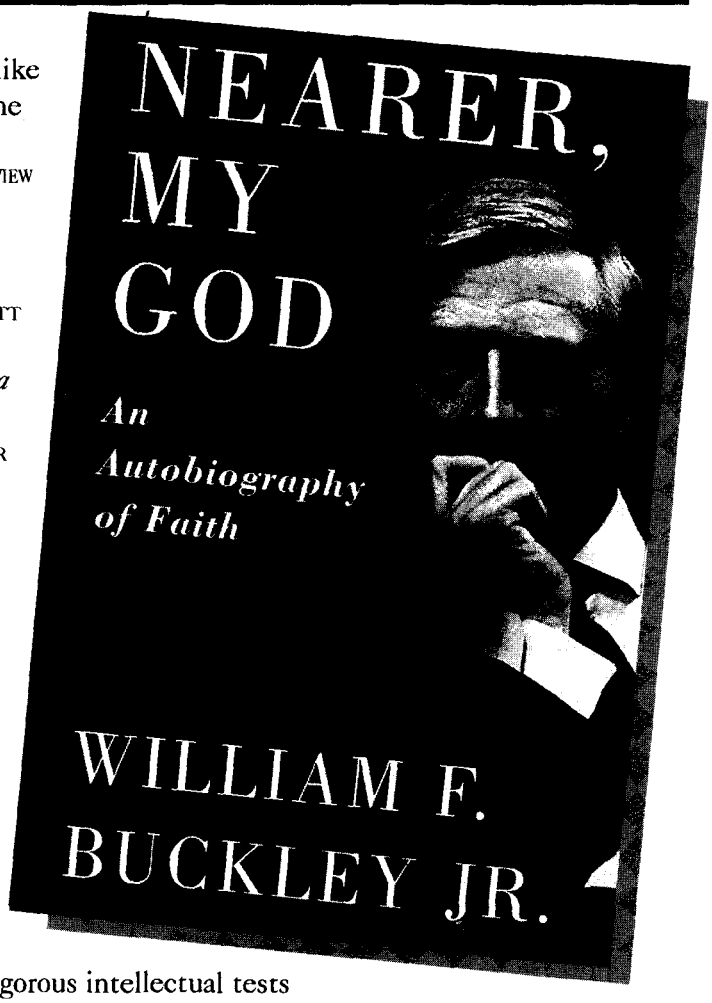
# A Selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club. Chosen as one of the Best Books of 1997 by *Publishers Weekly*.




". . .the book never stops being an autobiography. Then, like the best of essays, Buckley's ends where it began, with the question of religious practice in Christian schools."
—The New York Times Book Review

"A splendid story about a modern pilgrim's progress . . . erudite, engaging, poignant, and inspiring."
—William J. Bennett

"This beautiful book might easily be read as a kind of *vita* of the heart, a spiritual narrative that evokes a life that has found joy in the journey." —Our Sunday Visitor

". . . an inspired miscellany rich in anecdote, witty, and animated. What gives it unity as a book is the warmth and the depth of Buckley's faith, at once complex and many-sided and as simple and trusting as a child's."
—Christianity Today

". . . this may well end up a cultural landmark, one that leads, as much or more than it reflects, the religious revival sweeping the country." —The Detroit News

". . . a rollicking adventure story of the spirit, an elaborate trek around and about the lofty peaks of belief and conviction . . . a fascinating, intelligent, and deeply humane demonstration of belief in the face of the most rigorous intellectual tests and challenges. Belief emerges unshaken, and with it a profound sense of peace and purpose."—The Baltimore Sun

"A radiant book. A dimension of Buckley not previously visible in public—a faith that is touching and inspiring and quite beautiful."
—Lance Morrow

"I am a lifetime unbeliever. I have no reason to think that [my friend] Buckley is aware of that, such is the nature of his civility; I have never raised the point. But on reading this breathtakingly powerful book, a work of Olympian humility, I now know he cares."
—Michael Pakenham

"Buckley has never made a secret of his strong Christian faith, yet he confesses to a temperamental reticence. 'I am not trained in the devotional mode, nor disposed to it' he writes—nor, one might add, the evangelical mode. That is precisely what makes his new book unique . . ."
—Books & Culture

"This work is vintage Buckley: opinionated, articulate, moving, self-righteous, maddening, and elitist but never boring."
—Library Journal

"The philosophical and theological apologetics works in its own framework, but the personal part for me works a whole lot better. It makes the book a Christian classic, something I can give to students to say, here is Christianity, not as a matter of theory or doctrine, but as a living religion. Here he has taught that lesson in a book."
—Professor Jacob Neusner

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fits to people already retired and all other Federal Government expenses. Current payroll-tax revenues pay current expenditures for Social Security and everything else. This is why standard federal accounting practices for three decades have scored the Social Security surpluses as part of a unified budget. There is no separate lock-box for yearly Trust Fund surpluses. It goes right into the Federal Government's coffers. Perhaps President Clinton wants to encourage rebellious Social Security administrators to hide the yearly surpluses under a big mattress or in a large shoebox. Actually, he is trying to fool the public into thinking that a fictitious accounting gimmick, the Trust Fund surplus, should be replenished with overall budget surpluses, presumably as part of a rainy-day fund to cover the roughly $1 trillion of Social Security debt. But under current law, this replenishment would itself be transferred to the Treasury. No other investment of excess funds is permitted.

A much better idea comes from Sen. Phil Gramm and others who would allow workers to keep 2 per cent of their total payroll-tax contribution to Social Security and invest it in private market securities of their choosing. This defined-contribution approach would allow workers to use compulsory savings to tap into market rates of return, which have averaged roughly 10 per cent during the last century (16 per cent since 1982), instead of the paltry 2 per cent investment return provided by the Social Security system. Over time, the 2 per cent contribution could rise to create a retirement system that was truly a vested pension.

What is more, the Gramm approach would stop the practice of using workers' retirement savings to finance current budget spending. Individuals would simply choose to invest elsewhere. Our state-run pay-as-you-go system would be converted as those of Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Poland, and Australia already have been—into a private retirement system completely separate from the federal-budget quagmire. As a healthy economy throws off budget surpluses—especially if Congress holds to spending caps—on-budget surpluses can be returned to taxpayers through tax cuts, while Social Security surpluses are returned to workers through an expanded private contribution system. In this way federal budgeting will be more orderly, and more restrained, while the entrepreneurial economy will be free to maximize its potential.

# NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

In your column a while back you said, "If Patrick O'Brian does not get the Nobel Prize for literature, I'll lend my name to any call to boycott it." You went on to say that O'Brian is the most original, most resourceful, most word-gifted entertainer since Dickens.

That is why O'Brian could never get a Nobel Prize. The Nobel committee, like all other literary committees in the past decade, awards prizes only to works that require an effort of will to read, and a dedicated effort to keep reading. An entertainer like Dickens, or O'Brian, is beneath their consideration.

Sincerely,
H. Stewart Duncan
Sunnyside, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Duncan: Thanks for the explanation. Now I see. Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Alas, your brother Reid's excellent point (Notes & Asides, October 27) was somewhat dulled by his disregard for the rules of *Wheel of Fortune*. In the play of the game, when a letter has been selected by a contestant, all like letters in the answer must be displayed. Accordingly, it would not be possible for the layout as shown to have "Hamlet Prince of Denmark by William Shakespeare" as a solution.

H-A-M-L-E-T P-R-I-N-C-E O-F D-E-N-M-A-R-K
B-Y W-I-L-L-I-A-M- S- -A-K-E-S-P-E-A- -E

Already displayed are an "H" in the word Hamlet and "R"s in both Prince and Denmark. Accordingly, the puzzle would indeed present the contestant with a most difficult challenge, inasmuch as the sole remaining usable letters are "G," "J," "Q," "U," "V," "X," and "Z." Which leaves only various Slavic-sounding tongue-twisters as possible solutions. Szakespeage, perhaps?

Very truly yours,
Mark O. Simmons
Fort Wayne, Ind.

■ Dear Mr. Buckley,

I'll just cry if you can answer this one without recourse to reference materials.

What is the verb that Hindus use to signify "to contemplate one's navel"? A conservative county GOP official of my acquaintance tells me that although Hugh Scott was the quintessential Liberal Eastern Republican, yet the old warhorse had a certain wit, and had once said that "most senators spend their time X-ing" (if we let X designate the infinitive).

On the other hand, we would not face many of the problems that we do, had those on the Left contented themselves with X-ing, rather than insisting on remaking the world.

Servus tuus,
Jonathan R. Regec
jonathanregec@usa.net

Dear Mr. Regec: I not only don't have it in memory, I don't know where to find it. But by the way, Senator Hugh Scott was a *very* witty guy. Cordially, —WFB



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AMERICA'S NEWSPAPER

The Washington Times

January 18, 1998 | NATIONAL WEEKLY EDITION | $2.50 (U.S.)

## CIA scores showdown Saddam 1, Clinton 0

Iraqis seen likely to 'flout' U.N. demands

By Bill Gertz
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The CIA has concluded that Saddam Hussein was the winner in the latest standoff over weapons inspections and that he will "flout" United Nations demands if the weak response to his actions continues.

Saddam's regime is stable and the Iraqi leader appears to have scored a diplomatic coup with recent Russian-led efforts to focus

Paula Jones, center, talks with her tax attorney Brent C. Perry, right, of Houston during a news conference in Long Beach, Calif. on Jan. 6. Jones' adviser Susan Carpenter-McMillan is at left.

## Jones, Clinton to meet at the White House

By Frank J. Murray
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Clinton, who insists he doesn't remember ever meeting Paula Jones, will get a chance to say so when he meets her face-to-face at the White House, The Washington Times has learned.

A secret subpoena calls for the president to give his first sworn testimony at that time in Mrs. Jones' lawsuit, which charges that he exposed himself to her in a Little Rock hotel room on May 8, 1991, invited her to perform an oral sex act, and when she declined penalized her in her job as an employee of the state of Arkansas.

President Clinton's lawyer in the Paula Jones case said on national television Jan. 8 that the schedule for the president's deposition may change because The

see JONES, page 22

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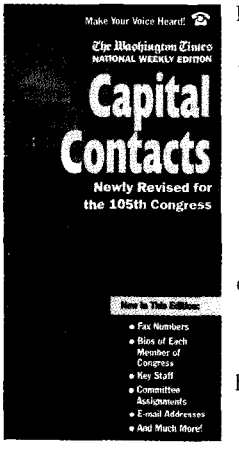


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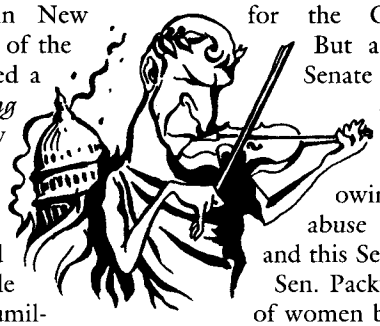
# BREAD & CIRCUSES

## Year of the Intern

DURING the Year of the Woman in 1992, a record number of women ran for the Senate, many of them expressing their determination to avenge the treatment accorded Anita Hill by male senators during the Clarence Thomas hearings. This November, these avenging female senators will be running for re-election during the Year of the Intern. At the Democratic convention in New York City during the Year of the Woman, feminists published a newsletter titled *The Getting It Gazette*. That title now aptly describes the adulterous adventures of the man nominated at that convention. But like battered spouses, Clinton's female supporters will bear any humiliation rather than abandon their guy.



Hillary Clinton rallied the sisterhood to provide cover for her lying Lothario, and it has meekly complied. Patricia Ireland, president of the National Organization for Women, finds the intern scandal "frustrating" because it is "such a distraction from the key issues that are facing us, questions of public policy and foreign policy." To help us all put the pesky distraction behind us, NOW is asking White House and congressional officials to sign a pledge "to reject sexually intimate relations with employees and volunteers." Now *there's* a campaign pledge! But not everyone needs to make such a declaration. Not everyone has Bill Clinton's contempt for women.

Signed pledges to keep hands off the help haven't gotten other sexual miscreants off the feminists' hook. When John Tower was nominated to be Secretary of Defense in 1989 and allegations of adulterous conduct surfaced, Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D., Md.) manned the barricades to prevent someone who "so clearly demonstrates disrespect for women" from taking the top Pentagon job. The senator declared, "The phrase 'conduct unbecoming an officer' is an important concept in the U.S. military. It has been applied over the past two hundred years in order to maintain a standard of behavior that inspires respect not only of the military but of us civilians, too. I believe the Senate should apply the same standard to the man who would be second in command in the United States."

Sen. Mikulski hasn't explained what standard of behavior is appropriate for the Commander-in-Chief. But as a member of the Senate Ethics Committee, she concluded that Sen. Bob Packwood should be expelled owing to his "systematic abuse of women, power, and this Senate."

Sen. Packwood's mistreatment of women became public knowledge during his re-election campaign in 1992, but it had been well known to his feminist supporters for over twenty years. He grabbed one abortion-rights lobbyist in his office in 1982. She later explained that she did nothing about the assault because Packwood enthusiastically supported her agenda.

So long as the misbehavior of the feminists' faithful friend could be kept secret, it was. But once he had been outed as a sexual predator, his female colleagues demanded that the Ethics Committee conduct public hearings. Democratic Sens. Barbara Boxer of California, Patty Murray of Washington, Carol Moseley-Braun of Illinois, and Dianne Feinstein of California agreed that "serious allegations of misconduct by any member of the Senate should be fully and publicly aired."

Sen. Packwood was finally forced to resign in 1995. Sen. Boxer praised the "precedent-setting" Ethics Committee decision because "in recommending his expulsion they are sending a very clear message that the Senate has zero tolerance for the type of behavior he exhibited over the course of his public service." Two years earlier, Sen. Boxer had urged Packwood to resign. At that time, Sen. Feinstein declared that if he was guilty as charged, "his credibility as a United States senator is destroyed. . . . he should resign."

Sen. Murray was chiefly concerned with vindicating Packwood's accusers in order not to discourage similarly mistreated women from seeking redress. "If you are harassed, keep quiet, say nothing, the cards are stacked against you ever winning," she said. "Procedures, rules, and other issues will obscure the allegations being investigated."

Patricia Ireland said of the Packwood case, "This has to be a heads-up for men in power. You can't treat women as the spoils of power." Unless you're the husband of a feminist icon, and she's willing to protect you.

THE Kathleen Willey and Monica Lewinsky scandals expose Bill Clinton's immorality, recklessness, contempt for women, and betrayal of his daughter. Hillary Clinton serves as his enabler in exchange for a share in his political power—he can abuse his as long as she gets to wield hers. She gets to screw around with health care, he gets to screw around. And if he gets caught like a naughty little boy, she will take charge and clean up his mess—and see her power enhanced. This is the pathetic role model feminists urge young women to emulate.

Although any self-respecting woman would prefer a Promise Keeper randomly plucked off the Washington Mall to Hillary's philandering partner, feminists sneer at husbands who celebrate fidelity and defend the country's most prominent Promise Breaker.

When he became a figure of ridicule, Marv Albert no longer had enough credibility to cover basketball games for a largely male audience. But many women remain beguiled by Bill Clinton.

During the Year of the Intern, Sens. Boxer, Murray, Mikulski, and Moseley-Braun will apparently seek re-election while ignoring, excusing, or denying the fact that Bill Clinton has proved himself unfit to be President. In the midst of the scandal, abortion-rights activist Kate Michelman praised the President for "the courage of his convictions" on women's issues. As long as he supports abortion rights, affirmative action, federal child care, and a boost in the minimum wage, it doesn't matter that he's a cowardly womanizer. Feminists just don't get it: they will stand by their man, even when he's walking all over them.

—KATE O'BEIRNE



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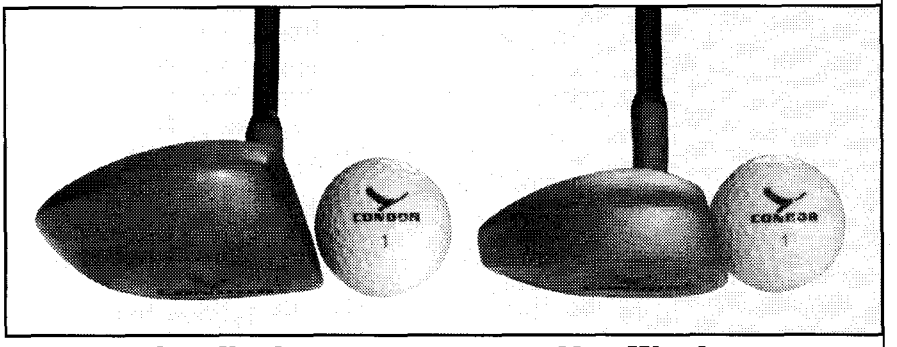
by Mike Hensen

# Innovative new fairway wood gets golfers on the green from tight and buried lies.

**Accurate from 145 to 225 yards.**

**Works where regular woods and irons won't**



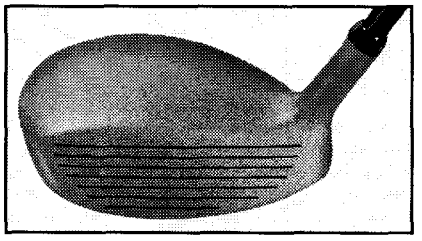
**Regular Wood** **New Wood**

YALESVILLE, CT – After years of listening to the big companies brag about the distance their drivers can add to tee shots, one of golf's smallest companies decided to design a wood for *second* shots. After all, what good is a great big, expensive tee shot, if the second shot is virtually impossible to play?

Second shots often wind up in a lie too tight to the ground or too buried in the grass for a regular fairway wood or iron to handle. Therefore, reasoned the company, there is a need for a specialist that can not only make an easy lie fly long and straight, but can deliver an equally great shot from a *bad* lie.

A spokesman told me this.

"Our second-shot specialist is scientifically designed to get a golfer on the green from any lie: good, bad, tight or buried, from as close as 145 yards and as far away as 225. We've tested the club from every conceivable lie among teaching and touring professionals and amateurs of all handicaps. We even asked golfers to step on the ball in the rough, and the club still got the ball on the green from 200 yards. Everyone who tested it loved it."



**For tight and buried lies**

Perhaps the importance of second shots has been overlooked in golfdom's quest for more and more distance off the tee. They can certainly save a bad tee shot or blow a good one, especially when they land in a bunker, rough or grass as short as peach fuzz. Regular fairway woods and irons aren't built for these kind of lies, and will invariably muff a shot. Here's how the company changed the club.

To get under the ball, it put 33% more weight in the soleplate. This lowers the center of gravity way below regular fairway woods and irons.

It made the clubhead smaller and with a much shallower face, so it would cut through tall grass and help a golfer visually as well. Most fairway woods tower over the ball, making it appear impossible for the club to get under it. This club's smaller size not only works better, it gives a golfer more confidence.

For buried lies the club has a wider face and a wedge-like forward lip. The soleplate is curved so the golfer can "rock" the clubhead into the best possible position behind the ball.

### *The "Step-on-it" test.*

To prove its new club works from the worst lie, the company asks a golfer to drop a ball in the rough, step on it and hit it. If its new club doesn't hit the ball farther and straighter than any other club – iron or wood – the golfer gets his or her money back.

The club also one-ups long irons. An iron digs into the ground and twists, when a tight or buried lie causes the golfer to hit behind the ball. If this club hits behind a ball, its soleplate will bounce off the surface and keep on going with minimum loss of clubhead speed or direction.

Golf's new second-shot specialist is called the Condor TL. Its all-steel head comes in two lofts, 16° and 19°, and is available with a steel shaft ($99.00 each), graphite shaft ($119.00 each). For maximum clubhead speed and a surer grip, there is a big-butt graphite TurboTip shaft model ($139.00 each). The company recommends carrying both lofts for as much second-shot range as possible, and gives a $20.00 discount, if you by both.

The Condor TL is not in stores. To try it you must call **1-800-285-3900** or fax 1-203-284-1623 or send your name, address and check (or cc number and exp. date) to **NGC Golf (Dept. TL-26)**, 60 Church St., Yalesville, CT 06492. There is a $10.00 shipping and handling charge. CT and NY must add sales tax. Specify regular or stiff flex, men's or ladies', right or left-handed, when ordering.

The company gives you 90 days to take the "Step-on-It" test. After hitting the ball, you can either keep the club or return it for a refund.

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WITH THE POPE IN CUBA

# Cuba Libre?

*Castro was weakened by the fall of the Soviet Union. Will John Paul's visit be the final straw?*

WM. F. BUCKLEY JR.

HAVANA

JUST after 1 P.M. word from the cockpit came in, "Personnel return to their seats; prepare for landing in Havana." I thought back to when I heard equivalent words on first encounters with other totalitarian capitals: in 1970, coming down to land in Moscow, and in 1972, approaching Peking. You stare at the landscape closing in on you. You find yourself looking for signs of Gulag. Not likely, ninety miles south of Key West, but Fidel Castro did his best to give the Cubans a tropical Gulag, and the big question was going to be: Will the visit by the Pope make a difference?

I traveled as a guest (pay your own way, but we'll make the arrangements) of the Catholic episcopacy, flying down with the Boston group, headed by the Cuba-savvy Bernard Cardinal Law, up three days later with the New York group, led by the formidable John Cardinal O'Connor. There were 16 bishops and 29 priests on board the southbound flight, a good substitute for a St. Christopher medal. The high point of our trip would come on Sunday, the open Mass in Havana at the Plaza de la Revolución. The itinerary permitted the grittier pilgrims to travel on Saturday (departure time, 4:30 A.M.; return, 6:30 P.M.) to Santiago, at the eastern end of the island, to witness the third of the Pope's four Masses.

Santiago nestles in Oriente Province, where Fidel got his start as a random terrorist in the sheltering mountain range. Fourteen months later, on New Year's Day 1959, he swept into Havana as plenipotentiary leader of Cuba. Thirty-nine years after that he is still maximum leader and, one assumes in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, still Numero Uno; whether supreme, or merely dominant, isn't known. As far as the Cuban people are concerned, Castro is quite simply—in charge. If there are arguments among his advisors sometimes resulting in policy compromises, the Cuban people don't know it, and in any case their voice in matters discussed is not recorded. They know only that somebody, with Castro's approval, is there to tell them what they can do and what they can't, which includes a ban on consuming more than one pound of rice and one cup of sugar every ten days. "It's too bad Castro can't tell our bodies how many calories they need to eat in order to stay alive," one Cuban discreetly commented, complaining about the awful scarcity of food and medicine. Everything in Cuba is scarce except in the dollar stores. It is one of the few countries in which poverty has actually increased in the past six years. Up until 1992, Cuba had socialism and massive paramilitary Soviet aid. Since then, Cuba has had just socialism.

Socialism and the American "blockade," as they refer to it here: more properly, Senator Helms's press chief, Marc Thiessen, corrects you, the American "embargo." A blockade prevents all shipping from coming into port. An embargo restricts only shipping from the aggrieved power. We have embargoed commerce with Cuba for almost forty years, but not on the current scale. On February 24, 1996, two of Castro's MiGs shot down two unarmed Cuban-American planes. That was high adventure for young pilots gleeful at an opportunity to exercise their training on live targets. "*We hit him!*" the tape records. "*Cojones!*" "*This one won't mess around any more!*" "*Fatherland or death!*" But Congress and President Clinton resolved to mess around on a grand scale. A bill was drafted and signed which intensified the U.S. embargo and added huge firing range to it, complete with ad hominem details to the effect that this or that section of the Act could not be circumvented until Fidel Castro and (his brother) Raúl Castro were . . . powerless. One of the Act's provisions —hold your breath—a) denies any country the right to engage in Cuban commerce in which a product developed at a property once upon a time confiscated by Castro is traded, b) holding liable to civil penalties the entrepreneur carrying on such trade and c) enjoining the State Department to withhold U.S. visas from officers of any corporation engaged in such trade. This part of the embargo outraged what we like to think

TODAY CHEF CASTRO WILL SHOW US HOW TO MAKE HIS SCRUMPTIOUS "PEOPLE'S FLAN"—USING ONLY ONIONS, POWDERED MILK, RUSSIAN VODKA AND THIS CHARMING AIR FILTER COVER FROM A '52 CHEVY... DAN?
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*Mr. Buckley is an* NR *Editor-at-Large.*



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of as our allies, and this time they had a point. We are all opposed to traffic in stolen property, but enforcement by foreign governments of antique titles after a time becomes pretty difficult to handle, especially in the case of claims that have attenuated bloodlines. (We trade with Russians who handle all kinds of goods that once belonged to the Czar and the ruling class.)

The European Human Rights Commission has denounced the Act as imperial effrontery. The "Bloqueo"—Spanish for blockade—is scorned by all Latin American countries. Criticism of it accommodates primal Hispanic appetites. One is to find cause to criticize the United States ("*El coloso del Norte*"—the Colossus of the North); a second, to sympathize with any sister government that engages in property confiscation, this being a Latin American addiction. Castro has greatly opportunized on the embargo, soliciting sympathy from Latin Americans for the economic damage done to Cuba by it, and exulting in the opportunity to advise the Cuban people that their economic hardships are traceable to it. Talk of economic hardship is a way to catch the attention of Pope John Paul II. As expected, the Pope criticized the embargo in one of his declarations.

THE players' strategies were always plain. Fidel Castro moved quickly and comprehensively to try to appropriate the papal visit. He could of course go only so far, given that Pope John Paul II writes his own lines. To begin with, the invitation to visit Cuba came not from Castro but from the Cuban bishops. The Church has been a target of Castro's from the outset. In 1961 he confiscated the Catholic schools, including the Jesuit school he had himself attended. In 1965 he exiled two hundred priests. As of 1959, 72 per cent of the Cuban population had been baptized. The figure today is 41 per cent. There were then 723 priests, now 269. The Church was never outlawed by Castro, but churchgoing was for the spiritually defiant.

With the dissipation of ideological energy, the religious scene began to change, well before the visit of the Pope. Auxiliary Bishop William Murphy of Boston told the passengers on the flight south that he had attended a Palm Sunday Mass in Havana in 1988 and found the church only half full. In 1994, same church, same event, it was crowded. The papal visit was slowed by the two downed Cuban-American airplanes, but at a critical moment in the negotiations later that year, Castro decided to encourage the visit. He called on the Pope in Rome and made what seemed like weekly concessions. It was disclosed that he would greet the Pope on landing . . . That he would attend the initial appearance of the Pope at the University of Havana . . . That he would appear at the great Mass on the Sunday . . . By the time the Pope reached Havana, white/yellow banners of the Vatican flew everywhere. What truly astonished the visitors was the painting that faced the outdoor altar at the end of the Plaza, a tennis-court-sized depiction of Jesus of the Sacred Heart with huge lettering on the top: "JESUCRISTO EN TI CONFIO." "You know," Cardinal Law commented the next day, "Castro didn't really have to permit *that*."

*'You know,' Cardinal Law commented the next day, 'Castro didn't really have to permit* that.*'*

All the above can be made to sound like formalistic courtesies, but in Cuba they were much more than that. The taxi driver spoke of the stupefaction of it all. "He [they tend not to use Castro's name] is *always* there. Up there. *He* is talking to *us*. Down here. Last night *he* was down here. *The Pope* was up *there*. The Pope was speaking. *He* was not speaking. He was not saying *one word*. He was just sitting there." Max Weber, in describing charisma, specified what the Leader must not do. He must never appear to be sick. He must always be the center of attention . . . He must *never* just sit there.

Castro counted on getting from the Pope some rhetoric that would make Castro sound like a mere co-conspirator against greedy capitalism. The Pope has had the problem, in the estimation of some who are keen to observe the distinctions, of catalyzing among some of his listeners schematic social formulations that appear to follow logically from humanitarian pursuits. The Marxism of Fidel Castro counts heavily for popular appeal on the demonization of wealth, which metastasizes, under Marxist theory, into the demonization of property. The Pope has affirmed his belief in the right of property, but he also decries materialism and economic polarization. The danger comes from theoretical projections, ingenuous or opportunistic, concerning what then to do about materialism. If wages are too low, the populist instinct is to write laws raising the minimum wage. If a country is mostly poor, why not tax that much of it that isn't poor?

Fidel Castro's highest ambition could not of course be realized. Pope John Paul II was not going to leave Cuba endorsing socialism as an answer to the problem of poverty in Cuba, which in any event does not have a significantly wealthy class. It once did. Castro confiscated the holdings of the wealthy class. These were rapidly dissipated; and, after forty years, Cuba is broke. That doesn't matter to Fidel. In his farewell statement at the airport he thanked the Pope for visiting the "last bastion of Communism."*

No deductions were publicly drawn about the causes of the poverty of Cuba, nor prescriptions offered for its alleviation—except that the United States should rescind its embargo.

THE problem of Fidel Castro, the human being, was visually taxing, on every one of the five days. We saw him greeting the Pope; in conference with him at the university session; seated in the center front row during the great outdoor Mass in Havana; and, most copiously, bidding the Pope farewell at the airport, late Sunday afternoon.

Some people develop personal allergies to certain historical figures. I confess to an allergy to Fidel Castro. It was not lightly developed. In 1959 Castro seemed a rather bracing, voluptuous Robin Hood, making his case against a corrupt dictator. But very soon he began to earn the odium in which he is held by a pretty large company of people, including members of his immediate family, a score of early comrades he tortured and exiled, and the million he forced into exile.

On Saturday, the papal Mass at San-

*"[T]he fundamental error of socialism is anthropological in nature. Socialism considers the individual person simply as an element, a molecule within the social organism, so that the good of the individual is completely subordinated to the functioning of the socio-economic organism." *Centesimus Annus*, May 1, 1991.



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tiago was introduced by the local archbishop, Pedro Meurice. Describing later that day what had happened, Auxiliary Bishop Murphy was so excited that he forgot to leave the elevator, which proceeded to the next stop. Archbishop Meurice, a quiet, reclusive prelate, took the microphone that morning and said

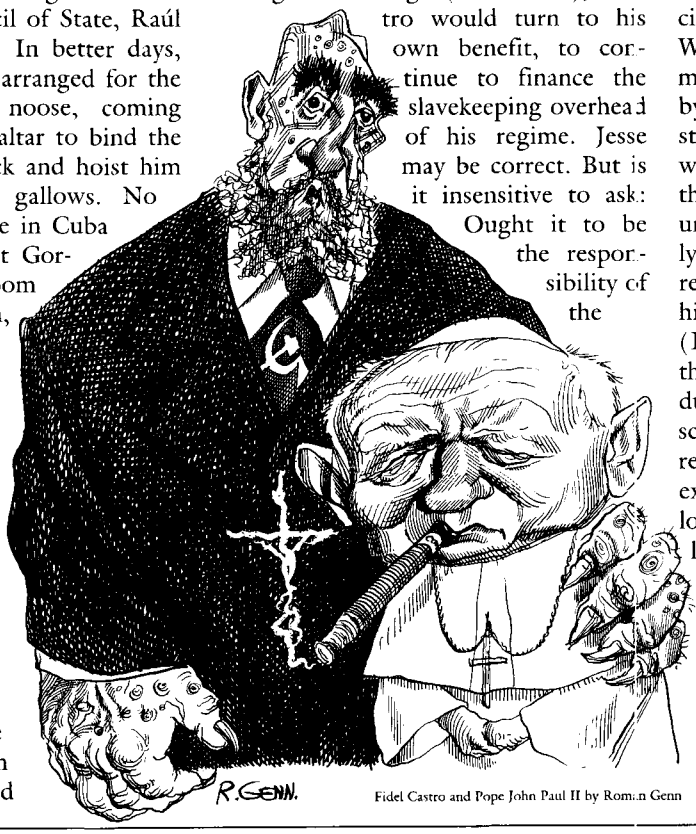
*Do we have here in Cuba now the* perestroika *that Gorbachev let into the room in the Eighties?*

about the Castro regime, in almost as many words, what victims of it have known for many years but would not have thought it safe to describe when inside the barbed-wire reservation of Fidel Castro's Cuba. The archbishop told the 200,000 Cubans that they had been living under a regime that had corrupted the moral traditions of Cuba, that a new life, a new culture, a new Cuba was what the future held out for them. A standing ovation. Sitting opposite was Raúl Castro. The Pope rose to speak. He thanked the archbishop. Tumultuous applause. He then thanked the "civil hosts, including the Vice President of the Council of State, Raúl Castro." DEAD SILENCE. In better days, Castroism would have arranged for the materialization of a noose, coming down from above the altar to bind the subversive bishop's neck and hoist him onto the impromptu gallows. No more. Do we have here in Cuba now the *perestroika* that Gorbachev let into the room in the Eighties, which, after only a few years, ushered Gorbachev out of the room?

THE embargo of 1996 bears the strong imprint of Sen. Jesse Helms. At NATIONAL REVIEW we have applauded most of Sen. Helms's positions over the years, many of which were brewed from our own analyses and inspirited by a common devotion to the anti-Communist cause. But the special emphasis we have historically accorded Castro's Cuba derived from his transformation of his country into a menacing bayonet of the Soviet enterprise. Three years after Castro came to power he sheltered Soviet nuclear weapons powerful and numerous enough to attack every major American city this side of Seattle.

The Sovietization of Cuba brought on a flight to America of one Cuban in ten. One million productive, educated Cuban-Americans have welcomed politically any act anti-Castro in shape or design. Many senior members of the anti-Communist community have been similarly affected by the inertial pull of yesteryear's anti-Communism. We were right, back then, to oppose Castro as a regional agent of the Soviet Union. But with the collapse of the Soviet Union, he is merely: one more evil dictator. As despicable as Papa Doc, as obnoxious as Trujillo. But we aren't any longer in the business of sending in Marines to go after local tyrants. John Quincy Adams reminded us that though we are friends of liberty everywhere, we are custodians only of our own.

Sen. Helms believes that ending the embargo would not help ten million impoverished Cubans. Whatever change in Cuban fortunes might result from ending the embargo (he believes), Castro would turn to his own benefit, to continue to finance the slavekeeping overhead of his regime. Jesse may be correct. But is it insensitive to ask: Ought it to be the responsibility of the United States to decide whether freedom to trade with Cuba is abused by a Cuban government?



Fidel Castro and Pope John Paul II by Roman Genn

Is the Pope a material witness? Not really, not on this issue. And in the case of John Paul II there is the dire matter of his health. One observer found himself close to the Pope when he came away after his Mass at Santiago. "Let me put it this way. If the man I laid eyes on had been my father, I'd have called an ambulance and told it to take them to the nearest hospital."

There was some trepidation about the Pope's health. Happily, at the Plaza de la Revolución on Sunday cloud cover shielded us from the sun and a brisk wind protected us even from the ambient heat generated by one million fellow creatures, every one of them, it seemed, at elbow-length. The loudspeakers were adroitly placed and the celebratory music, sacred and secular, exactly reflected the mood of the multitude. The Pope was cautiously introduced by Havana's Cardinal Jaime Ortega. The cardinal was rumored to have been upset by the exuberance of the bishop in Santiago, left nervous over excesses that might upset the dictator with whom Cuban Catholics would have to deal after the Pope was gone. We heard then the voice of the Pope. Not very expressive, but the Spanish he spoke was well turned and clearly enunciated. In a matter of seconds he communicated his special, penetrating, transcendent warmth. When the Mass got under way I made my way through the crowd, discouraged by the great distance between where I stood and where the Pope officiated. I walked back to the hotel and turned on the television, and saw that magical figure complete the Mass. His face mostly—hangdog in expression. We saw the result of his affliction (Parkinson's) and his age (77) and his gunshot wound (1981). The Pope has traveled to more than eighty countries. Observers are dumbfounded by the 16-hour-a-day schedules he imposes on himself. The result of it all is a stoop, and the listless expression on his face—the hangdog look. But then intermittently the great light within flashes and one sees the most radiant face on the public scene, a presence so commanding as to have arrested a generation of humankind, who wonder gratefully whether the Lord Himself had a hand in shaping the special charisma of this servant of the servants of God, as the Pope styles himself. □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# The Trouble with TR

*Theodore Roosevelt may be the very model of a modern President–but not for conservatives.*

MATTHEW SPALDING

EVERYBODY loves Theodore Roosevelt. Speaker Newt Gingrich often touts TR, the most dynamic of Presidents, as his model for activist political reform. George Will appreciates Roosevelt's "invigorating strenuousness." Steve Forbes applauds Roosevelt for seeking "to expand individual opportunity and strengthen individual control." Marvin Olasky praises him for being a "defender of Biblical progressivism." Sen. John Ashcroft, a potential presidential contender, has joined the chorus.

Liberals love Teddy, too. In a recent speech at Harvard's Kennedy School, House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt set out "to create a progressive vision for a new century"; his models were Franklin Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson—and Teddy Roosevelt.

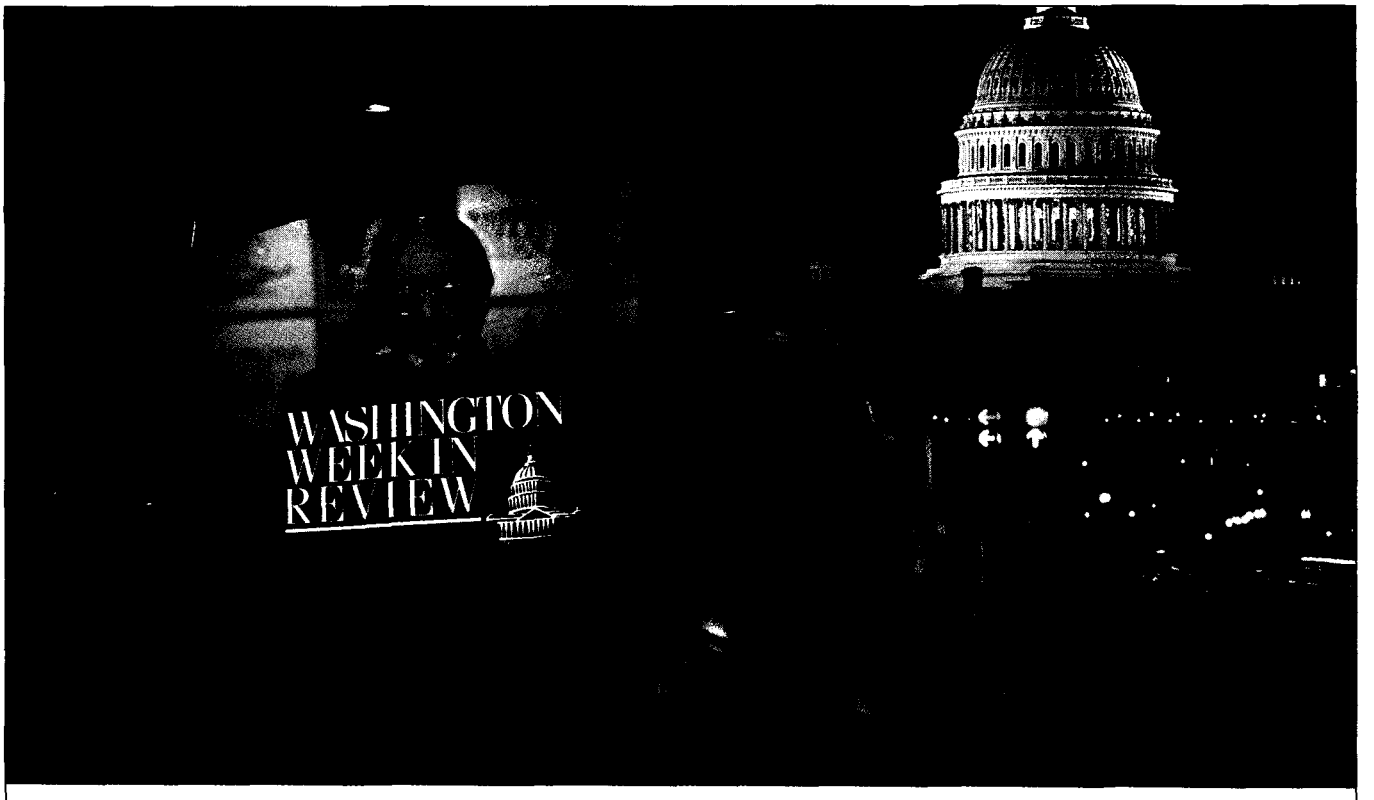
These invocations occur in the context of a discussion of what America means today, a discussion that penetrates to the soul of the Republic—and, as William Kristol and David Brooks of *The Weekly Standard* have recently argued, of the Republican Party. Kristol and Brooks claim TR for a conservative nationalist tradition beginning with Alexander Hamilton and carried on by Abraham Lincoln—a tradition of strong executive leadership, a muscular, morally grounded foreign policy, and governmental activism in the service of competition. They mean both to restore the majesty of democratic government and to resist the feminization of the culture.

All these aims are worthy. But Roosevelt is a poor ideal for American leaders at the beginning of a new century—and for conservatives in particular. For his nationalism, both at home and abroad, was indissolubly connected to a view of progress that is at odds with America's basic principles.

TR's image as a man of action has helped obscure his political thought—a problem compounded by most of his biographers. For instance, H. W. Brands's recent *T.R.: The Last Romantic* (Basic Books) provides an accurate and lively account of the historical details, but then concludes that Roosevelt was an irrational romantic.

Actually, he was a progressive open to

*Mr. Spalding is Director of Lectures and Educational Programs at the Heritage Foundation and co-author of* A Sacred Union of Citizens: George Washington's Farewell Address and the American Character *(Rowman & Littlefield).*

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the latest scientific thinking and quick to imbibe the racial theories popularized at the turn of the century. At Harvard and Columbia, the young Teddy studied social Darwinism and the impact of race on the development of social organization. Perhaps social Lamarckianism would be a better term: Roosevelt came to believe that peoples could acquire characteristics through civilizing influences and then transmit them to the next generation.

*TR favored central control of the economy for the sake of efficiency.*

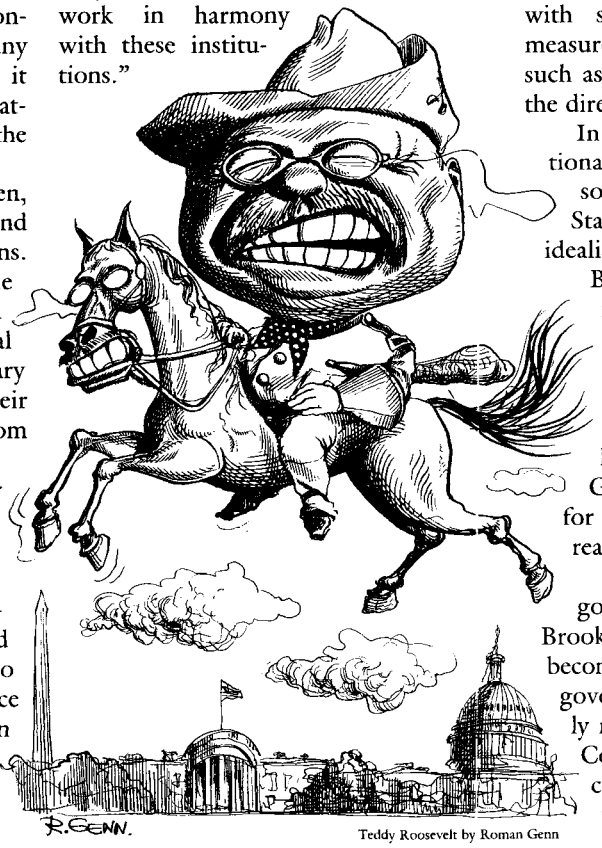
He learned from professors like John Burgess that the Teutonic race was at the cutting edge of societal evolution, and believed that superior races had a responsibility to civilize the barbaric races, foster social efficiency at home, and guard against their own descent into weakness and decadence. That's why TR promoted the vigorous virtues: "All the great masterful races have been fighting races, and the minute that a race loses the hard fighting virtues it has lost its proud right to stand as the equal to the best." He also opposed birth control for Americans ("No race has any chance to win a great place unless it consists of good breeders") and advocated tough immigration restrictions on the "alien races" he considered dangerous.

The purpose of foreign policy, then, is to inculcate these virtues and expand the reach of advanced civilizations. Roosevelt began strategizing about the world with Henry Cabot Lodge and A. T. Mahan, the theorist of naval power, when he was assistant secretary of the Navy in 1897, and he put their theories into practice as President from 1901 to 1909.

TR advocated a bigger and better Army and Navy so that America could "speak softly and carry a big stick." He faced down the Kaiser over German involvement in Venezuela, and used negotiations and veiled threats to take control of Santo Domingo's customs house and to force the repayment of the Dominican Republic's debts. When Colombia refused to ratify a treaty for a canal across the Isthmus of Panama, Roosevelt pushed a local revolt against that nation, used U.S. ships to prevent Colombian troops from suppressing the uprising, recognized a new Panamanian government, and signed the treaty with it instead.

"If we refrain from doing our part of the world's work," he wrote, other races won't and "we will have shown ourselves to be weaklings." Roosevelt's evolutionary perspective had implications for his domestic policy that conservatives should find even less palatable. For TR, the rise of administrative government was necessary in order to develop social efficiency. While it is "perfectly true that the laissez-faire doctrine of the old school of political economists is receiving less and less favor," Roosevelt noted, "if we look at events historically, we see that every race, as it has grown to civilized greatness, has used the power of the State more and more."

Despite his image as a "trust buster" —early in his Presidency he sued the Northern Securities railroad company for violating the Sherman Antitrust Act —Roosevelt's agenda was not to dismantle large corporations but to control and regulate them in the public interest. "Great corporations exist only because they are created and safeguarded by our institutions," he announced in 1901, "and it is therefore our right and our duty to see that they work in harmony with these institutions."



Teddy Roosevelt by Roman Genn

Other progressives, like Wilson, favored small businesses, small farmers, and states' rights, and saw Big Government as necessary to protect the Jeffersonian vision against Big Business. TR favored central control of the economy for the sake of efficiency, and his ultimate goal was a benign collaboration of mammoth institutions.

Roosevelt's regulatory proclivities gave us the Bureau of Corporations, two major revisions of the Interstate Commerce Act, the Meat Inspection Act, and the Pure Food and Drug Act. Increasingly progressive after his election to a full term in 1904, Roosevelt had by the end of his second term declared war against "predatory wealth," advocated administrative commissions to recommend regulatory measures to Congress, and called for graduated income and inheritance taxes.

After he left office, the former President, inspired by Herbert Croly's *The Promise of American Life*, formulated a more comprehensive progressive program called the New Nationalism. In a speech drafted by Croly, Roosevelt observed that "if we do not have the right kind of *law* and the right kind of *administration* of the law, we cannot go forward as a nation." Government would be centralized, and so would politics. Toward that end, in the 1912 presidential race TR advocated an activist state with strong regulatory powers and measures to nationalize public opinion such as open presidential primaries and the direct election of U.S. senators.

In foreign policy, Roosevelt's nationalism eventually lost out to Wilson's internationalism; the United States became a world power along idealist rather than particularist lines. But at home the Roosevelt–Croly regulatory state triumphed. It was not just family pride when Franklin D. Roosevelt referred to both TR and Wilson as forefathers of the New Deal, nor is it historical ignorance when Al Gore praises the progressive duo for having "invented the modern bureaucratic state."

In the administrative state, self-government—the goal of Kristol, Brooks, and conservatives generally—becomes impossible. The substance of governance takes place in increasingly remote locales: state capitals, then Congress, then the federal bureaucracy, then the courts (and now various international bodies).



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Experts—the new elite—formulate rules to direct ever more of life on rationalistic lines. And the polis shrinks correspondingly. Michael Lind is correct in seeing FDR, LBJ, and other "national liberals" as TR's real heirs.

To undo their legacy will require the recovery of an older nationalist tradition, a tradition TR honored but misunderstood. He thought George Washington and Abraham Lincoln were great because they made sure America was ready "to expand when the inevitable moment came." Little interested in the principles to which the new nation was dedicated, let alone the constitutional order Washington established or Lincoln's stand against slavery in the name of that order, Roosevelt claimed that "the winning of the West was the great epic feat in the history of our race."

But for Washington and Lincoln, the United States was to be an empire based not on imperialism but on liberty; it was to be not an unlimited state but a limited constitutional republic. A strong foreign policy and an energetic Federal Government were key aspects of its greatness, to be sure, but America's exceptionalism stemmed from its purpose rather than its power. The nation's character may be tested by fighting wars and revealed in great national achievements, but it is *defined* by its liberating principles and embodiment of self-government.

Conservatives may find Theodore Roosevelt's brand of vigorous leadership refreshing. And it is good to emphasize national ideas when conservatism becomes small-minded and apolitical. But it is the older nationalism that is sound in its principles, potentially realigning in current politics, and the true font of our greatness. The most recent statesman to champion this America was not Teddy Roosevelt but Ronald Reagan. □

# Death March

*Advocates of euthanasia have a foothold in American culture. Now they're ready to take the next step.*

WESLEY J. SMITH

ADVOCATES of legalizing "assisted suicide" have long assured us that euthanasia would be a rare and limited act, reserved exclusively for those who are terminally ill, who are mentally competent to ask for it, and for whom there is no other relief from intolerable pain. It was assurances of this sort that helped induce Oregon voters to pass the world's first law specifically permitting assisted suicide in 1994, and to reaffirm that law last November. But now these assurances are being under-

*Mr. Smith, an attorney for the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force, is the author of* Forced Exit: The Slippery Slope from Assisted Suicide to Legalized Murder, *published by Times Books.*


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mined—by assisted-suicide advocates themselves.

Take the Hemlock Society, probably the best-known organization in this field and an enthusiastic promoter of the Oregon law. Its executive director, Faye Girsh, responded to a recent "mercy" killing of a father by his son in Louisiana by issuing a press release calling for legalization of euthanasia for those *unable* to decide for themselves. In this document, which went widely unnoticed, she said: "In the case of a minor or an incompetent adult . . . some provision should be made" to terminate those lives which, "in the belief of the patient *or his agent*," are "too burdensome to continue" (emphasis added).

Compassion in Dying, a Hemlock spinoff founded in 1993 to surreptitiously assist in suicides, is also broadening its mandate. Originally a local group in Seattle, it has metastasized into the Compassion in Dying Federation of America, funded in part by billionaire George Soros, who has donated at least $350,000 to various of its constituent groups. From its beginning, Compassion in Dying's PR material has insisted that assisted suicide should be allowed only for the terminally ill.

But, perhaps buoyed by last year's victory in Oregon, the Federation's flagship chapter, Compassion in Dying of Washington, no longer feels bound by such qualifications. A December fundraising letter declared, "We have expanded our mission to include not only terminally ill individuals, but also persons with incurable illnesses which will eventually lead to a terminal diagnosis." That definition covers a lot of conditions. It could include nonsymptomatic HIV infection, kidney disease, early-stage cancer, heart disease, and multiple sclerosis, to name just a few.

THAT'S not all. In a recent talk, Kathryn Tucker, the Federation's legal-affairs director, demonstrated how the Federation actually regards the "protective guidelines" it always claims will shield the vulnerable. One of the most important of these protections is the mandatory waiting period between the request for death and the issuance of the lethal prescription. Oregon's law requires a 15-day wait—not too long, surely, considering the irreversibility of the action. Miss Tucker now says that even this is "overly restrictive." Extrapolating from *Planned Parenthood* v. *Casey* and other "reproductive rights" cases, she expects the courts will "immediately" strike down the waiting period as "unduly burdensome."

If so, why did advocates such as Barbara Coombs Lee, the Federation's executive director and co-author of the Oregon law, include the waiting period in the first place? Miss Tucker's candor is breathtaking: "In the legislative forum, to pass [assisted-suicide laws], you need to have measures that convince people that it's suitably protective." She also claims that when the Supreme Court recently declined to create a constitutional right to assisted suicide, it instead created a constitutional right to pain control—so watch for litigation seeking to re-label euthanasia as "pain control."

Thus, it becomes ever more clear that even when activists speak of protections and limitations, terminal illness and suicide, what they are actually working to permit is the intentional killing by doctors of a wide variety of vulnerable human beings.

Jack Kevorkian is busily putting theory into practice. One of his latest victims, Franz-Johann Long, age 53, was mentally ill and under psychiatric treatment from the age of three. Long had been diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic and hospitalized in the 1980s after he had twice attempted suicide. Kevorkian's lawyers maintain that Long was suffering from terminal bladder cancer. But Dr. L. J. Dragovic, the coroner of Oakland County, Michigan, found that while there were signs of cancer in Long's bladder, the disease would have been eminently curable.

*The 'assisted-suicide' movement is really about death-on-demand. And the demand is not always the patient's.*

But you don't need to have cancer to receive Kevorkian's ministrations. Martha Wichorek, age 82, experienced the usual minor maladies of old age, but the reason she sought out Kevorkian, according to his attorney Geoffrey Feiger, was simply that she "wanted to die." Indeed, her suicide note admitted that she suffered from no serious malady. Thus, her killing was not the shortening of the terminal stage of a painful illness, but simply death-on-demand. Which, it is becoming increasingly clear, is the ultimate destination of the assisted-suicide movement. □

# Bilingual Bullies

*School districts across the country are not teaching English—because the Federal Government won't let them.*

JOHN J. MILLER

IN December 1994, Sandra Lenker took a friendly phone call from the Department of Education in Washington, D.C. Three years later, the superintendent of the Atwater Elementary School District in California's Central Valley finds herself stuck in a bruising fight with the department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) over her district's bilingual program. "The process is crazy," she complains. "I don't see how all of the time, effort, and energy we've put into this case helps children."

Sandra Lenker's battle with the OCR has gotten practically no attention—her district has only 4,400 children, and Atwater, located between Fresno and Sacramento, isn't exactly a media hub. Yet, the very fact that the OCR has decided to sick its lawyers on this out-of-the-way community illustrates the breathtaking reach of the Department of Education's effort to micromanage bilingual education—and its deter-

*Mr. Miller is vice president of the Center for Equal Opportunity and author of* The Unmaking of Americans, *which The Free Press will publish in May.*



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mination to keep children from being taught English.

Over the last twenty years, the OCR has been one of the most important forces behind the rise of bilingual education in the nation's schools. Armed with a 1974 Supreme Court decision saying that children whose command of English is weak have a right to special assistance in the classroom, it has bullied thousands of school districts into adopting programs based on the theory that children from other linguistic backgrounds should become fluent in their (or their parents') native language before learning English.

Although this theory is increasingly discredited, the Office for Civil Rights continues to push it. The OCR is now headed by Norma Cantú, formerly an attorney for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF). Miss Cantú is best known for defending racial preferences in college admissions. But at MALDEF she helped litigate lawsuits seeking to push school districts into bilingual programs. Now she is able to continue that crusade with the authority and resources of the Federal Government behind her.

The OCR as currently constituted provides a textbook example of gov-

*According to the OCR, even kids who speak* only *English still may need Spanish-language instruction.*

ernance by bureaucratic ukase. It has never put its bilingual-education policies into the federal code. Most districts involved in reviews by the OCR quickly accede to its demands and refuse even to talk about their problems, presumably for fear of losing federal funding. Janice L. Sperow, a San Diego lawyer who has represented a number of school districts, confirms this presumption: "Retaliation from OCR is a big concern," she says. But now a few districts, including Sandra Lenker's, are fighting back.

The OCR originally told Miss Lenker that Atwater had been randomly selected for a review of its program for students with "limited English proficiency" (LEP) who were also enrolled in special education. In April 1995, several OCR officials spent four days visiting the district. During an exit interview they told Miss Lenker they had spotted a few minor problems that needed fixing. No big deal.

Eleven months went by with no further word from the OCR. Then, in March 1996, Miss Lenker received a phone call. Expect a fax, she was told. Her machine soon spat out an eight-page "voluntary remedial action plan." It demanded that she agree to a series of changes not only in the way the district taught special-education kids who needed help with English, but also in its regular bilingual-education program. The OCR offered no explanation of why the changes were necessary. According to Miss Lenker, one investigator told her, "We haven't had good experiences negotiating plans when we release our findings." So, instead, the OCR just insisted that she sign on.


# New balata putter winning over golf professionals with its baby-soft touch and improved accuracy.

**Longer contact, enhanced feel control the ball more effectively than steel-faced putters**

**"Stop driving it–*lag* it."**

**By Mike Hensen**

**YALESVILLE, CT–** "One putt is all it takes to realize how badly steel-faced putters have hurt your game."

This is how a company spokesman challenged me with his new balata-faced putter on a practice green. So I took the putt and then did some investigating. One pro I spoke to told me he thought the new balata-faced putter was the most accurate he had ever played. Another said he was recommending it to all 400 members of his club. And several weekend golfers who tested it reported that the putter nearly doubled their accuracy from 30 feet or more.

The spokesman explains the putter this way.

"With the Condor Marksman (the putter's name) you stop banging the ball off hard steel– you *lag* it off a soft balata surface with the precise control of a billiard shot. The soft surface represents a monumental leap in ball control and I believe will eventually eliminate steel-face putters. Pros have used balata balls for years because of their superior control. Now we have applied that superior control to putting.

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Put it all together, and it's clear why the professionals are interested: the Condor Marksman is a deadly machine.

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Sandra Lenker was friendly toward the concept of bilingual education but this was too much, and so she hired some lawyers. The two sides have brawled ever since over questions such as whether Atwater must have a bilingual psychologist on staff at all times—and whether failure to do so represents a violation of students' civil rights. "In a lot of cases, what we've been asked to do isn't so out of whack," Miss Lenker says. "It's that this process has dragged on for so long and under such strange circumstances. We're trying to do the best we can for kids, and I'm not sure putting our resources into OCR compliance helps very much."

SANDRA Lenker believes she's on the verge of an agreement with the OCR. That is not the case with the Denver school system. Last fall the OCR asked the Department of Justice to sue Denver over its bilingual-education program—a decision that now lies in the hands of Bill Lann Lee. At stake is the $30 million in federal money that is pumped into the school system each year, about 8 per cent of the district's budget.

Everybody agrees that Denver's bilingual-education program was a wreck. Denver's bilingual-ed students were lagging academically. In 1995 the OCR reviewed the program and found it lacking in a number of areas. The school board was eager to improve it. So Denver developed a new plan for its 13,000 LEP kids (about one of every five children in the district), 90 per cent of whom speak at least some Spanish.

Under Denver's old plan, Hispanic LEP children had languished indefinitely in Spanish-language classes. The school board decided that it should aim to have these children exit the Spanish program within three years. Grades, teacher evaluations, parents' wishes, and test scores would determine students' readiness for mainstream classes. The proposal still contained a strong (probably too strong) native-language component, but at least it was moving in the right direction.

The OCR thought otherwise.

It objected vigorously to the idea that anything as subjective as teacher evaluations and the desires of parents should play a role in moving children out of bilingual education. It insisted instead that only standardized tests can show when children are ready to leave.

This came at a time when the OCR was investigating the University of California for using tests like the SAT in its undergraduate admissions process. In UC's case, the OCR contended that tests may be discriminatory because blacks and Hispanics generally do not perform as well on them as whites and Asians. So why the high regard for standardized tests in Denver?

Probably because standardized tests have been a means of keeping kids trapped in bilingual programs. Most school districts have determined who is ready to leave bilingual education by administering an English-proficiency test. Anyone who scores below a certain point—say, the 30th percentile of test takers—cannot graduate out of the program. But this method means that, by definition, 30 per cent of students must fail. And because these tests are given to students all over the country, including native speakers of English, it's the bilingual kids who are always at the bottom of the heap.

That's a result that seems perfectly acceptable to the OCR. In July, Lillian Gutierrez of the OCR's Denver office sent a letter to Denver's superintendent of schools: "Determining that a national-origin language-minority student speaks only English, or speaks English most of the time, is not equivalent to determining that the student is proficient in the language skills required to participate meaningfully in an English-only academic environment." So, according to the OCR, even kids who speak *only* English may still need Spanish-language instruction as a way of easing them into English.

The Denver case is likely to be pivotal in the battle between localities and the ideologues entrenched in the federal bureaucracy. Another turning point could be an initiative on the California ballot this June that would pull most of the state's LEP students out of bilingual-education programs and place them in English-intensive classes. The initiative has generated significant support, not least among Hispanics, many of whom are not listening to the hysterical shouts of their self-appointed community leaders. One recent *Los Angeles Times* poll showed 84 per cent of Hispanics favoring the "English for the Children" initiative.

This is not surprising: Hispanic parents nationwide overwhelmingly want their children to learn English. It's the bureaucrats at the OCR who have different ideas. If the California initiative passes, the OCR can be expected to move swiftly to have it struck down in the federal courts. Would the U.S. Congress then step in? Unfortunately, congressional Republicans' track record on this issue is not inspiring. In last year's budget deal, they agreed to increase bilingual-education funding to $354 million annually—up from $250 million in 1995. Their most forceful critic of bilingual education, Rep. Toby Roth of Wisconsin, retired in 1996.

Yet, at the request of Rep. Henry Bonilla (R., Tex.), Rep. John Porter (R., Ill.) has scheduled hearings on the OCR before his Appropriations subcommittee. In addition, Rep. Bonilla has asked the OCR to turn over copies of all the bilingual-education agreements it has made with local school districts around the country. This effort promises at least to require the OCR to explain its policies to the public—in plain English. □

# Semper Fi

*Twenty-five years later the sacrifice and faith of our Vietnam POWs is mostly forgotten. Shame on us.*

LIONEL CHETWYND

THE images recede now; 25 years on, the vision of those American prisoners of war etched by the sharp Philippine sunlight as they stepped onto the tarmac at Clark AFB is softer, like a gauze-doctored close-up of an aging movie star. An event that had been so desperately yearned for by so


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many for so long has become just another reference point for *Dateline NBC*'s "Timeline" segment. Certainly, the POWs' comrades still treasure their heroism. But is that enough?

Veterans' Day at the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial—"The Wall"—this past fall was bleak, the ceremony punctuated by showers. As the aging veterans of Southeast Asia stepped forward against the biting wind with their wreaths they called to mind the World War II heroes who marched in my youth. Stomachs bulge, hair greys, skin sags—time is no one's ally in this regard.

But back in the 1960s, as I watched the fiftyish heroes of Dunkirk and Singapore, of Bastogne and Bataan, of Anzio and Guadalcanal, of the Normandy beaches—Omaha and Sword and Juno and Utah—I felt a reverence for their sacrifice, a debt to their willingness to confront the greatest challenge of all in defense of my freedom. Surely the heroes of the Hanoi Hilton, the Rockpile, the Plantation, and the Jungle Camps deserve nothing less. Or is this just one more example of how we've raised a generation of people who think history began on their birthday?

Once, during my passing (peacetime) acquaintance with the military, I found myself among grizzled veterans of Dieppe, where, in World War II, intrepid Canadians paid a terrible price in blood to demonstrate to Joe Stalin that a second front could never be launched through a fortified port. I was fascinated by their story. The men had all known it was a suicide mission, but even though they had been given two-day passes before getting on the ships, not one failed to report. As Sergeant Betts growled in response to my interest, "My generation had to figure out what we were ready to die for. You kids don't even know what you want to live for."

There are no exact statistics on how many Americans fell into enemy hands in Vietnam, but 8,000 is a very defensible number. Operation Homecoming, 25 years ago, brought home 739. What accounts for such appalling attrition?

Grunts taken on the ground rarely lasted more than half an hour; their captors simply counted them as "killed in action." Aviators formed the largest contingent of Americans taken prisoner, but many of them too perished before ever arriving in a camp. If they survived ejection from their wounded aircraft, it was usually with broken limbs. If the injury was to a leg and the man couldn't walk, he would have been a nuisance to his captors. Once stripped of his boots and any other valuables, he became just another statistic.

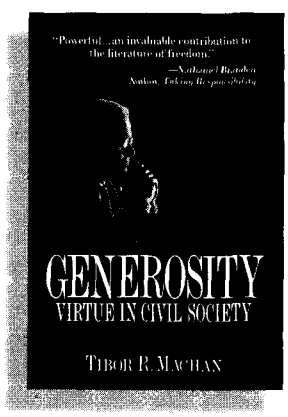
The "lucky ones" would end up being shuttled through a series of camps, a Gulag that led—if you survived the beatings, the starvation, the lack of medical attention—to the infamous Hoa Lo Prison in central Hanoi. Americans being Americans, it was soon dubbed the Hanoi Hilton by its unwilling guests. "Avoid the room service," they advised newcomers. It would become the burial ground for some of the best of my generation.

MAJOR Bai, the commandant of Ho Loa Prison, was known to his captives as "Cat." Probably Jesuit-educated, he thought of himself as a humane man. He could not understand the recalcitrance of the Americans: "Simply admit that since there is no declaration of war by your country, this conflict cannot be a war. Admit that your raids were therefore illegal crimes and I will keep you no longer; you may go home." But one after another refused. They were regularly reminded, "We can keep you for a hundred years. No one will know." Still the reply was always, "One go, we all go."

When the North Vietnamese discovered that Lieutenant Commander John McCain (USN) was the son of the admiral commanding the Pacific Fleet, they offered him an early release with no strings attached. He would be allowed to go home without admitting to any crimes. But he demurred. He was an American like the rest. And they stuck together, through the beatings, the torture, the years and years of solitary confinement. Cat could not understand that his prisoners were bound by loyalty, devotion, pride in their country. Better to die than betray America or an American. "One go, we all go."

They had been trained to consider captivity as an extension of battle. But fighting this new battle would take organization. Courageous officers like Commander James Stockdale (USN) established a chain of command at the Hanoi Hilton. The Senior Ranking Officer (SRO) would provide the lead-

*Mr. Chetwynd is an Oscar-nominated screenwriter whose credits include writing and directing* The Hanoi Hilton.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ership. An elaborate "tap code" would skin knuckles but provide a way of communicating through the thick cement walls of the old French colonial prison. "Remember," Stockdale tapped out to the ragged band that was now under his command, "you are Americans. With faith in God, trust in one another, and devotion to your country, you will overcome. You will triumph."

*These fellow citizens of ours, believing themselves deserted by their own countrymen, at times surely feeling forsaken by God, soldiered on.*

No doubt some of his countrymen back home would have been shocked by his failure to uphold the separation of Church and State.

Members of the antiwar lobby would occasionally drop by in pursuit of their agenda of the day. When Cora Weiss, the doyenne of the antiwar movement, had met with some of the POWs, she would then go to their jailers and report in detail what the men had said. The POWs would then be routinely tortured for their "wayward attitude." Evidently it never occurred to Mrs. Weiss and these other self-righteous souls that Vietnam was a closed society and that they would learn only what their Communist hosts wanted them to know. They had already decided that the Vietnamese were a pacific people who, left to their own devices, would be wearing saffron-colored robes and selling raffia work to tourists from Berkeley.

When Apprentice Seaman Doug Hegdahl (USN) was trotted out for a show interview with Tom Hayden, he asked Hayden why he had come. "I thought it would be a gas," was the answer. Stockdale refused to meet Jane Fonda. Time and again, he ran into the wall of his cell face first, knowing that a bruised and bloodied prisoner would never be paraded in front of antiwar activists or Communist propagandists like the Australian "journalist" Wilfrid Burchett ("well-fed bulls—" to our POWs).

The only news the POWs got was from the visiting "peace movement" people or via the shrill barking of Hanoi Hannah on the loudspeakers. She told them of the demonstrations on the Washington Mall, of Kent State, of the draft-card burnings. At first, the old-timers dismissed this as just another instance of Red propaganda. But as the "new boys" arrived, they confirmed the bitter division at home. "Take early release," Cat cooed. "No one at home even cares about you any more. We have won this war on the streets of London and Paris, and on the Washington Mall." Commander Jeremiah Denton (USN) spat back, "They may be demonstrating back home. But nobody's *forcing* them into the streets. That's why I'm here. To make sure no one can ever do that to Americans." And so a succession of SROs held firm: "One go, we all go."

Cat was ultimately deemed a failure, and his superiors brought in Cubans to "aid" in the interrogation. A particularly brutal sadist, dubbed "Fidel" by the Americans, enjoyed murdering MIAs in front of confirmed POWs (if an American had not been confirmed as a POW by the news media, his captors felt free to kill him). Fidel thought that would break them. But, like Cat, he would be frustrated.

It was probably around this time that the prisoners' memories of home started to become abstract. Their task was now to build this small community that would be a mini-America, one that would reflect the values they held dear: sacrifice, honor, interdependence, self-reliance. Even if they never made it home again, they would die with their dignity intact. Oh, God, were they not the best of us?

The 1964 New York World's Fair was in full swing and "I Wanna Hold Your Hand" was just climbing the charts

when Ev Alvarez was shot down and became the first confirmed American POW. He would return almost a decade later to the world of *Boogie Nights* and the Me Generation's endless quest for self-fulfillment. All those years of maggot-ridden food, of the crushing loneliness of solitary confinement, of beatings, of the pain of watching so many others die, and he gets off the airplane the month that the cover of a major men's magazine is screaming: "The Impotence Epidemic: Has It Caught You Yet?"

AT THE end of my long and complex relationship with the POWs, an experience that was the basis of my film *The Hanoi Hilton*, I finally understood what Sergeant Betts had told me about Dieppe: that there are some things that need to be done no matter how counterintuitive they are. And that when you have gone into the labyrinth and faced the minotaur, then you have something that no one can take from you: the knowledge that you have done what is expected of you—or more precisely, what, in conscience and duty, you expected of yourself. Nowadays, it is chic to understand heroism of this kind only in terms of a New Age model of self-actualization. But that is the dodge of people who were never there and need to ignore those who were.

Stockdale, Denton, Dramesi, Thorsness, Alvarez, McCain, and all the others were and are real people. These fellow citizens of ours, believing themselves deserted by their own countrymen, at times surely feeling forsaken by God, soldiered on. They became, unwittingly, the custodians of our deepest national treasure, the exemplars of patient patriotism and of the willingness to defend freedom even when it is not their own but that of a foreign people of whom most of them knew very little.

Our POWs' sacrifices maintained an unbroken chain from the earliest days of the United States: Americans will be free. They will not be broken. Our POWs' stories will be kept alive quietly, almost underground, until the nation is ready to be reminded once again that we can produce ordinary citizens who will be heroes when called upon. No amount of grey in their hair can diminish the POWs' radiance. I hope that we are building an America worthy of them. □



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# Living in Spin

**Students of the future, trying to attach mnemonic tags to the obscurer Presidencies—XYZ, Commodore Perry, "I do not choose to run"—may think, for Bill Clinton's, "Intern." When the irresistible forces of lust and imprudence meet the immovable objects of tenacity and spin, a citizen can: summon the Lord's judgment; weep; or—enjoy the spectacle. Our contributors do all three, as well as parse the legal and political ins and outs.**

## It's Not the Sex

*We're ever so much more high-minded than our relish for sex scandals suggests.*

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

LISTEN to almost any sophisticated pundit on the Lewinsky affair and the first words you will hear are: "It's not the sex . . ."

This is a phrase with a history. Thirty-four years ago Harold Wilson, seeking to exploit the Profumo affair in a high-minded way, came up with the line: "It's not the sex, it's the security risk." (The security risk in question was that Christine Keeler was sleeping with the British Minister for War and a Soviet military attaché—so sex hardly came into the matter at all.)

If it's not the sex, however, then what is it? Echoing Watergate, the most common explanation in the Lewinsky affair is: "It's not the sex, it's the cover-up." Or to get technical: "It's the lying." Or "It's the suborning of perjury."

The obvious snag with the principle thus stated is that, assuming the allegations to be true, Bill Clinton was covering up only because he guessed that an affair with a subordinate less than half his age would be regarded as morally shameful. If Mr. Clinton had confessed all, people would not have said "Ho, hum." The public would have denounced the press and bought the papers. There would have been a fiesta of prurience and moral condemnation.

Scandals are the litmus tests of morality. They tell us what we instinctively feel about moral questions, which is not always what we say we say in public statements.

How come? America is no longer united by a broad moral consensus. Victorian respectability—equal parts of Christian prohibition, prudence, and fear of one's neighbor—provided millions of people with a kind of moral ready-reckoner for almost 150 years. It had its critics. But as Samuel Butler pointed out, those who criticized it as a tepid imitation of real virtue were generally the same people who found it too exacting for their own lives.

The acid of the Sixties, however, dissolved respectability along with much else. Public morality has fragmented into a dozen different moral visions as feminists, evangelical Christians, the media class, talk-show hosts, and Internet nerds all advance their own agendas. Underneath this superficial Babel, however, the habits and instincts of respectability linger on—and bubble up whenever a scandal comes along.

The problem is that every would-be public morality has a different punchline. The modern political class, for whom tolerance is the only virtue, would like to say, "It's not the sex, it's the tabloids." On this view, private sexual behavior, however bizarre, can never be a scandal. It is simply an aspect of "human nature." The real scandal is the tabloids—the vanguard of public prurience (itself a pejorative description of respectability). Shoot the messenger and all will be well.

Bill Clinton in 1992 by Roman Genn

*Mr. O'Sullivan is an Editor-at-Large of* NATIONAL REVIEW.



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Of course, that is wishful thinking. For curiosity and gossip are aspects of human nature too. When Jay Leno can joke on late-night television that "Al Gore is just an orgasm away from the Presidency," tabloids are not needed to whip up public interest. Private sins beyond a certain point—say, one respectable adultery per decade—become a legitimate matter of public interest because they make the Presidency a laughingstock.

The higher journalists take refuge in the argument, "It's not the sex, it's the hypocrisy." Just as tolerance is the only virtue elevated by agnostic liberalism, so is hypocrisy the only sin it really condemns—and, surely not coincidentally,

# Big Man

THE story of Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky is a story whose general outline is perfectly familiar to anyone who has ever attended an ordinary American high school. She is clearly the girl that the kids—ever cruel—used to call the "school slut." Lively, exhibitionistic, full of longing and anxiety about herself, she hangs around the locker of the school's number-one male—say, the captain of the football team or the boy voted most popular in his class (or, as we now learn of Monica Lewinsky herself, a teacher)—and offers herself to him. For her this serves both a longing to be important and a long-practiced expectation of humiliation. For him, a girl is after all a girl. Her offer is taken whenever he has nothing else to do, in a dark corner of the school or the back seat of a car. Though he is going steady with the prom queen, and hence will never be seen with her in public, she takes solace from the idea that there is a sense in which by being ever available to him she has the greater power. Ultimately, of course, he rejects and humiliates her, perhaps by insulting her in the presence of others, or perhaps by handing her over to a needy friend. And she thinks to rescue a few shards of self-respect by telling all about their relations to someone who will make her story known.

Of course, now that so many high-school kids are what they call sexually active, this basic story has acquired a certain number of twists and subtleties. It nowadays might be not her mere availability but the variety of the sexual hungers she is willing to sate that accounts for her status as school slut. Nevertheless, the transactions of status and power between her and the school's number-one male as well as the certainty of her humiliation cannot have changed much. For as the same text in which there cannot be found any special exception for oral sex tells us, "Male and female created He them." In other words, each after his and her own kind, even in late-twentieth-century America.

In the story of Monica Lewinsky and Bill Clinton as we have it, things are not quite so youthfully gauche. He bought her an occasional gift, for example, and may now and then have engaged her in friendly conversation. And when the moment came to get rid of her, first out of the White House and finally out of Washington, she was handed over to a friend who set out to do something genuinely helpful for her. In the end, of course, he did not succeed.

But a number-one male never succeeds in keeping the girl he humiliates quiet, and Bill Clinton, who is after all a high-school boy with clearly a lot of experience in the ways of high-school girls, should have known that. For what would have been the point of her offering to service him in the manner the whole country now knows he prefers if she were never under any circumstance to tell people about it?

But the problem connected with her telling people about their relations came to be involved with such grown-up unpleasantnesses as perjury and/or the suborning thereof, attended by the possibility of indictment, conviction, and even impeachment. That was not how the scenario was supposed to have played out, and the poor kid was undoubtedly terrified. She even had to engage her parents in her predicament.

Such emotionally lopsided affairs are always also a little dangerous to the comfort and reputation of the beloved, whoever he may be, but this time what was at stake was nothing less than the Presidency of the United States. She wanted to do the right thing by him, poor Monica, including commit perjury. And she is so young and so wide-eyed, she might have contented herself with sharing her secret with just a few friends. But then the extra humiliations began—and she has probably just begun to experience what the Clinton White House can inflict in the way of scabrous gossip and outright lies, such as Clinton's so predictably saying he never had anything, nothing, nada, zero, less than zero, to do with "that woman."

*The feminists haven't a word to say for the plight of this girl, on her knees before the chief power in the land.*

Meanwhile, of course, the feminists are cowering somewhere in a corner, exposed for the political groupies they are, with not a word to say for the plight of a little 21-year-old girl, on her knees before the chief power in the land, who is also her boss. (Had that boss been anyone else, they would undoubtedly be determined to demonstrate that such an episode of sexual harassment should cost him many millions of dollars.)

We hear from the message-bearers of the sexual revolution that young girls no longer think of oral sex as the kind of big deal it was in olden times. Maybe that is so, but, on the strength of the sad story of Monica Lewinsky, girls are still girls, their tears are still tears, and high school is still high school. Even when the captain of the football team happens to be the President of the United States. —MIDGE DECTER

*Midge Decter, editor and freelance writer, is the author of* The Liberated Woman and Other Americans.



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more damaging to conservatives who want to promote virtue at least in theory than to liberals. Hence, when the televangelists Jimmy Swaggart and Jim Bakker were caught with hookers, the media covered their "hypocrisy" on page one and at length.

Feminists so far have been uncharacteristically silent. Yet there is an obvious feminist interpretation to hand, namely: "It's not the sex, it's the womanizing." That would be taking the personal politically, and it also would please the lesbians in their ranks by helping to cut out the competition for girls. But the dirty little secret of feminists is that even the butchest of them likes a womanizer who votes right.

Sen. Packwood's method of courtship was to grab the nearest girl and stick his tongue in her ear. It was cheap (no meals, no flowers), efficient (no time-wasting "she loves me, she loves me not"), productive (a reasonable rate of sexual returns), and politically costless: as long as Packwood voted for abortion, no feminist stopped him. Even the molestees closed their eyes and thought of *Roe* v. *Wade*.

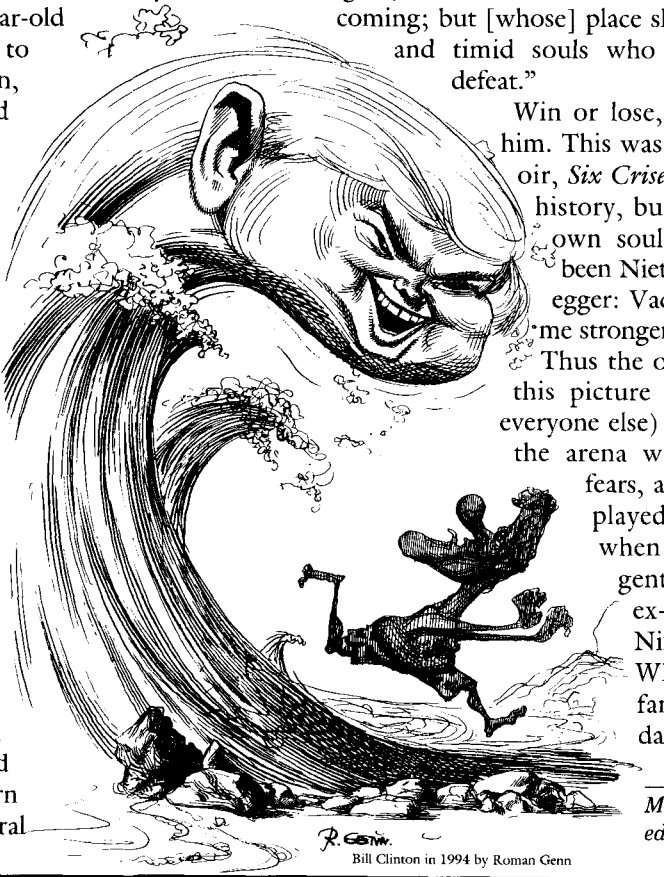
Now, Mr. Clinton protects not just abortion, but abortion even when the baby is three-quarters delivered. So the feminists remain quiet and, if cornered, will reply: "It's not the sex, it's the infanticide (that makes us love him so)."

Middle America is caught between respectability and talk-show culture. The dumbed-down liberalism of Oprah, Geraldo, etc., demands incidental reasons for disapproving of even the most baroque sexual practices. Hence Middle America mumbles, "It's not the sex, it's the age thing." Mr. Clinton took advantage of a young innocent.

The problem here is not that Miss Lewinsky is not innocent; it is that almost no 21-year-old is. Any intern today has had 12 to 15 years of explicit sex education, AIDS awareness campaigns, and instruction in every possible use of the condom. Teenagers are not warned by schools against predatory adults; they are sent out equipped to party. Many could teach Mr. Clinton a thing or two.

And he may need instruction. Rumors have him assuring Miss Lewinsky that, according to the Bible, oral sex is not adultery. Jimmy Carter confessed to adultery because he committed it in his heart; Bill Clinton denies adultery because he committed it in his chair. Or: "It's not the sex—because it's not really sex."

Almost *everyone* feels dimly that if Bill Clinton had sex with Monica Lewinsky, he behaved recklessly and shamefully. Modern culture has deprived us of the moral vocabulary in which to express such feelings, forcing us to rely on secondary legal or political arguments. The first step to recovering a moral vocabulary is to tell the next sophisticated pundit (or European): "It's the sex, stupid." □



Bill Clinton in 1994 by Roman Genn

# Clinton & Nixon

*To find Bill Clinton's prototype, we have to go past Tricky Dick—way past.*

RICHARD BROOKHISER

IF Bill Clinton shares Richard Nixon's fate, it will not be because he shares his character.

Richard Nixon was marked by an acute self-consciousness. The self of which he was conscious was always contending: with Communists, liberals, history, reporters, Kennedys, destiny. One of his favorite quotations was Theodore Roosevelt's paean to the "man in the arena": "whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but [whose] place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

Win or lose, the struggles strengthened him. This was the theme of his first memoir, *Six Crises*—which were not crises in history, but crises in the history of his own soul. Nixon's credo could have been Nietzsche, via Arnold Schwarzenegger: Vad does not desdroy me makes me stronger.

Thus the official Nixon. Missing from this picture (though evident to almost everyone else) was the fact that the man in the arena was tormented by anxieties, fears, and grudges. Nixon's poverty played a role in this, especially when he fought the rich or the genteel (Hiss, JFK). But not all ex-poor boys become Richard Nixon (Ronald Reagan didn't). Whatever the sources in lost family history, Nixon was a damaged self. The gap between

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his damaged self and the self he put forward was signaled by the sweat on his lip.

Bill Clinton has also been damaged. The floozy mother, the brutal stepfather, being fat in Arkansas and a hick at Oxford—all, like rotten pilings, underlie his energy and charm, and his various bingeings. But this President is not a damaged self. He is someone with no self at all. This is what distinguishes him, both from Nixon, and from normal people.

"I just try to put it over in a little box," the President said of his troubles, as Hurricane Monica was approaching land. "We do box it off," the First Lady chimed in. The phrase comes straight from *Leading with My Heart*, the memoirs of Virginia Kelley, the President's late mother: "Inside my head, I construct an airtight box. I keep inside what I want to think about, and everything else stays beyond the walls. Inside is white, outside is black." The only amendment to be made to these statements is that the President is not limited to one mental box, containing good or bad things. Everything he does or thinks occupies its own box. His life is a collection of discrete events. This explains why his lies are not lies as others understand the term. The President means everything he says at the moment he says it, and because no thing or moment is con-

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*The following is excerpted from the statement made by Sen. James L. Buckley on March 19, 1974:*

I SPEAK out reluctantly because I know that what I have to say will bring pain and distress to many who are my good friends and who have been good to me, Richard Nixon numbered among them. I am, moreover, reluctant to provide any degree of satisfaction to those in and out of the media who have been exploiting the Watergate affair so recklessly. I speak of those who in their campaign for purity in government have made such wholesale use of slanderous gossip, violations of grand-jury secrecy, leaks of confidential documents and meetings, and any other device they felt to be useful to their purpose.

. . . The stage has now been reached, however, at which Americans must come to terms with Watergate if Watergate is not to end up drowning all of us.

The Watergate affair can no longer be thought of as merely a troublesome episode such as occurs from time to time in the political history of every country. It had its faint origin in what was itself a trivial and foolish incident. But from this minor incident, as has often happened before in history, Watergate has expanded on a scale that has plunged our country into what historians call a "crisis of the regime." A crisis of the regime is not like a political confrontation or labor dispute or economic recession or any other specific and limited difficulty. A crisis of the regime is a disorder, a trauma, involving every tissue of the nation, conspicuously including its moral and spiritual dimensions.

. . . At the very heart of the crisis are things which consist of felt truths which do not lend themselves to the confines of charts and graphs and polls and headlines. I speak of the spreading cynicism about those in public life and about the political process itself. I speak of the pervasive and undeniable sense of frustration and impotence that has become the dominant political mood in the nation. I speak of a perception of corruption that has effectively destroyed the President's ability to speak from a position of moral leadership. And I speak of the widespread conviction that Watergate and all that it has brought in its wake have done unique and perhaps irrevocable damage to our entire system of government.

. . . The impeachment process has begun. [But] I don't think many of us have seriously considered what an impeachment trial would be like in the era of mass electronic communications. Public opinion would compel the proceedings to be televised. For three months or more the Senate Chamber would be transformed into a stage set for the greatest melodrama ever conceived. History would come to a stop for the duration—in the country and throughout the world. The ruler of the mightiest nation on earth would be starred as the prisoner in the dock.

. . . There is one way and one way only by which the crisis can be resolved, and the country pulled out of the Watergate swamp. I propose an extraordinary act of statesmanship and courage —an act at once noble and heartbreaking; at once serving the greater interests of the nation, the institution of the Presidency, and the stated goals for which he so successfully campaigned. That act is Richard Nixon's own voluntary resignation.

Inevitably the President is the focus, the essence of the crisis of the regime. It could not be otherwise. The character of the regime always reflects and expresses the character of its leader. It is he who appoints his executive staff. If he does not explicitly command what his aides and agents do, they in any event do what they sense and believe he wants them to do. The captain is responsible for his ship, the commander for his army. And Mr. Nixon has explicitly recognized this responsibility.

*Inevitably the President is the focus, the essence of the crisis of the regime. If he withdrew, this crisis would be solved.*

If the President withdrew, this crisis would be resolved. Watergate scars would remain, of course. The debris would have to be cleaned up. There would still be many of the problems that have issued out of Watergate. . . .

. . . I am deeply aware, of course, that in recent weeks Richard Nixon has found several occasions to say that he must defend the office of the President, and that he therefore should not resign because that would weaken the office. But precisely the opposite is the case. In order to preserve the Presidency, Richard Nixon must resign as President. If future Presidents are to carry out their grave responsibilities in the free and unfettered manner President Nixon desires, they must be able to inherit an office that has not been irrevocably weakened by a long, slow, agonizing, inch-by-inch process of attrition. □



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nected to any other, everything he says is sincere. Some part of Richard Nixon knew he was a crook, even as he denied it. Since there is no other part of President Clinton besides the part that is speaking, there is no deception, and no guilt.

The term for this state of mind (or minds) is narcissism. Popular language associates Narcissus with beauty and self-regard. But the psychological key to the myth is that it is all about surfaces. Narcissus is riveted by his image in the pool because his image is all he has. There is no one home. Narcissists are like billiard balls, their lives a series of clicks off the other balls on the table. Narcissists need the click of encounter, because it is the only thing that reminds them that they are alive. If a narcissist is beautiful, he will live for the attention his beauty attracts. If geniality is his strong suit, as it is for the President, he will play to that. The alternative is extinction.

The famous American Clinton most resembles is not Nixon, but Aaron Burr—also charming, also a ladies' man, also a liar. What was his "rare attraction," someone once asked an acquaintance, who replied: "In his manner of listening. He seemed . . . to find so much more meaning in your words than you had intended; no flattery was more subtle." Burr didn't work at it; he was just a narcissist, trying to stay alive.

Aaron Burr didn't go quietly, which bodes ill for the current crisis. Thomas Jefferson wanted to hang him for treason, but Burr got himself acquitted. In his eighties he married a rich widow (a former whore), and proceeded to run through her money while cheating on her. Talk about the Comeback Kid.

Should we be gleeful about all this? Early in the scandal, I caught up with *Wag the Dog*, the movie about the White House flacks who simulate a war to distract from a sex scandal—an obvious satire on President Clinton, but much more obvious now than the filmmakers intended. Some of the bits—the movie sex occurred next to the Oval Office; one handler says, "Deny, deny, deny"; Jay Leno appears, making a joke—were straight from life. "That's not funny," a lady down the aisle groaned. No, and yes.

But the movie, in its sour and cynical fashion, was also about the whole system of media politics, of emotions that are faked and unearned and amplified with all the voltage of pop culture. A scene of Willie Nelson conducting a "We Are the World"–like ballad of pseudo-patriotism was so parasitic of the real thing, I felt sick; I almost walked out. Bill Clinton isn't the problem. Everyone since the invention of television has more or less dirty hands.

George Washington should have stayed home. □

# Media Complex

*When the going gets rough, a few of Clinton's friends in the media really get going. Why?*

MARK CUNNINGHAM

THE Clinton aides who have engaged in such transparently dishonest spin on the talk shows have an excuse: It's their job. But what explains the First Couple's apologists in the Fourth Estate?

It's their *career*. Consider Eleanor Clift. She has spent so long playing the naïve, robotic Democratic loyalist on *The McLaughlin Group*, it's difficult for her to approach politics

*Mr. Cunningham, a former* NR *articles editor, is Associate Editorial Page Editor at the* New York Post.

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in any other way. And if she did, it would risk ruining her brand-name recognition.

The explosion of *McLaughlin*-style "debate" TV shows means there is a steady demand for predictable liberals. MSNBC got the entire White House line on the Lewinsky affair the very first night of Sexgate by airing Miss Clift: "I think now we are in for an examination of this young woman and her background to test her credibility. . . . Linda Tripp is also the link with another woman who allegedly said in a deposition that the President made improper advances. So you begin to wonder what her role is."

Miss Clift was ready to defend as well as counterattack. President Clinton has "been elected twice with people knowing that he has had affairs. . . . I think past Presidents, Lyndon Johnson for one, certainly Jack Kennedy, these things went on." She went on to suggest that Ken Starr's probe is somehow a threat to abortion rights.

*Wall Street Journal* columnist and *Capital Gang* panelist Al Hunt moved as fast as Eleanor Clift, although Hunt is less concerned with ideology than with self-promotion.

Nearly every Hunt column and TV appearance has the same subtext: This man is Connected, an Insider, a Player. Thus, he noted in the *Journal* column he wrote the first night of the scandal (as well as in three TV appearances that first week) that he is close to Vernon Jordan.

Ergo, according to Hunt, the suborning-perjury charge "simply doesn't ring true. The President has demonstrated that he's too shrewd to get caught in such a trap. And yesterday, even some Washingtonians who felt the story could be the end of this President didn't believe the published charge against Mr. Jordan, an exceedingly careful and cautious lawyer. (Mr. Jordan, a director of Dow Jones, which publishes [the *Journal*], is a longtime friend; I am convinced the allegations against him are false.)"

Note that Hunt clears the President delicately, without reminding us that the proof of his shrewdness was the way—captured on another set of tape recordings—he coached Gennifer Flowers to deny another set of "allegations" without ever telling her outright to lie. Jordan's reputation, by contrast, is understood to speak for itself.

Hunt's own self-granted status as upright insider allows him to carry White House water. Consider this passage: "The critical question . . . is what Ms. Lewinsky does and says in the days ahead. Earlier, in a written statement, she denied that she had ever had a sexual relationship with the President." Hunt then continues: "If [she] sticks to her initial account, the whole matter likely will dissolve. . . . Mr. Starr may try to pressure her, with the tapes as leverage, but this could be dangerous ground for the controversial independent counsel."

To paraphrase: Monica, lie; it's your safest bet. Trust me, I know. (Above all, admire me as someone who knows.)

And note Hunt's own lie-by-implication. After all, Miss Lewinsky's true initial account is one taped by Linda Tripp, in which the ex-intern agonized over whether to produce the affidavit that Mr. Hunt prefers to treat as her original story.

Eleanor Clift and Al Hunt made it their business to defend the President *effectively*, in contrast to a few embalmed-liberal journalists such as Lars-Erik Nelson, who explicitly took Clinton's side at the start. But even Nelson had to give a nod to the implications of the Lewinsky tapes. And some Clinton defenders actually jumped ship.

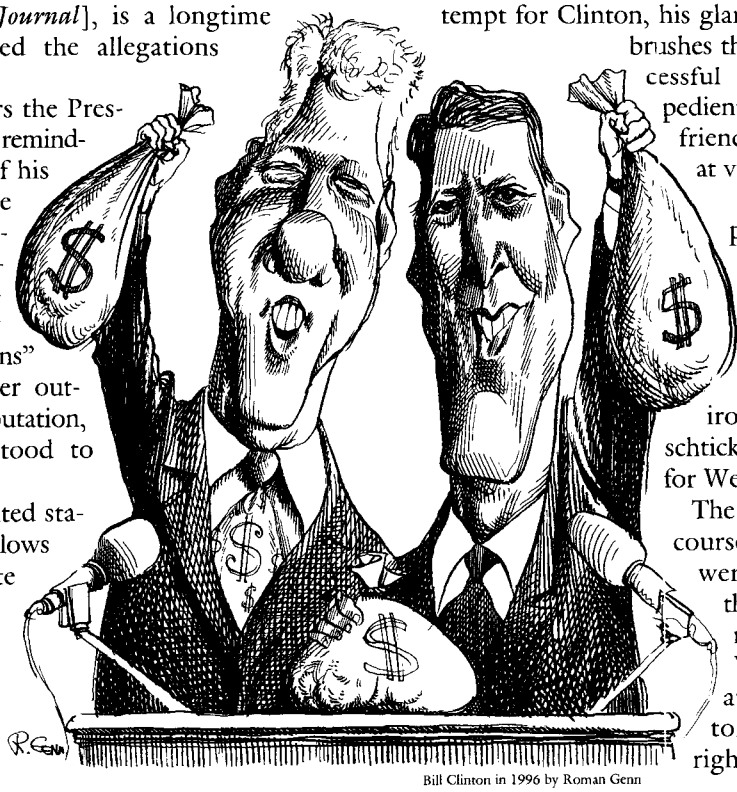
Take Jacob Weisberg, now chief political correspondent for the online journal *Slate*. He has love-bombed the Clinton White House for years with what is meant to be an iconoclastic twist—anti-anti-Clintonism, if you will. His specialty is arguing a plainly absurd thesis, as in his 1994 *New York* story, "Why Bill Clinton Is a Great American President / No, Really."

In his last pre-Sexgate column, "No Respect: Why the Washington Establishment Hates Bill Clinton," Weisberg gives half a dozen reasons for anti-Clinton animus before settling on the real one: the President snubbed the Georgetown social elite after 1992. This is meant to be a thesis counterintuitive, knowing, and shrewd.

What about the more obvious explanation for the contempt for Clinton, his glaring ethical flaws? Mr. Weisberg brushes them off: "What President or successful politician has never acted expediently by dissembling, dropping old friends, and compromising his ethics at various points?"

But exactly a week later, in a post-Monica piece, Weisberg argued that Clinton would have to go, precisely because of his dissembling and compromised ethics. The revelations had left Clinton so rich a target for irony that the usual anti-anti schtick would have seemed forced even for Weisberg.

The tides of scandal rise and ebb, of course. Miss Clift and Mr. Hunt weren't sounding so embattled in the wake of the State of the Union message. Soon enough Jacob Weisberg will probably be back at their side, attacking the Clinton attackers. And all will be right again in the media world. □




Bill Clinton in 1996 by Roman Genn



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# Poetic Injustice

*Bill Clinton may deserve an independent counsel, but the country doesn't.*

ROBERT BORK

WILLIAM Jefferson Clinton, whose Administration has been marked, among other things, by an extraordinary streak of good luck, may be, much against his will, about to make a major contribution to our national well-being through sheer bad luck. Our President is being immolated on the altar of the ethics he promised. An Aztec priest, dressed in the garb of an independent counsel, hovers over him, obsidian knife in hand, ready to excise one portion or another of Mr. Clinton's anatomy.

Given the evidence and the man's past history, there seems no doubt that Clinton is guilty of something in the Monica Lewinsky affair. He is certainly sexually compulsive and a master of the coverup. Though this pattern began in Arkansas (Gennifer Flowers was telling the truth), the tactics of coverup, a/k/a obstruction of justice, continued and reached a crescendo in the White House years (the Travel Office, the FBI files, the rummaging through Vincent Foster's office, the flight of those witnesses who did not conveniently forget everything or take the Fifth Amendment, and so on, apparently ad infinitum.)

White House apparatchiks and the First Lady say the President is the victim of "a vast right-wing conspiracy." That the Administration is driven to such preposterous allegations is enough in itself to convict Mr. Clinton. It is to be doubted that a dozen members of the so-called "right wing" could manage to line up in alphabetical order. But the First Lady and the President's henchmen are engaged in the classic strategy of the guilty: if the facts are against you, argue the law; if the law is against you, argue the facts; if the law and the facts are against you, put the prosecutor on trial. Having mortgaged the integrity of her marriage in return for political power, Mrs. Clinton will fight to the last to receive her end of the quid pro quo.

The spectacle now unfolding is so heartening to those who always thought Mr. Clinton lacked character that many, including conservatives, are perceiving previously unsuspected virtues in the independent-counsel statute. They should not. It is a bad statute whatever the outcome of Mr. Clinton's travails. For a moment I rejoiced in the squirmings of the man who had promised us the most ethical Administration in our history. But the most obvious distinction between conservatives and the Bill and Hillary White House is integrity—which means

*Mr. Bork is the author most recently of* Slouching towards Gomorrah.

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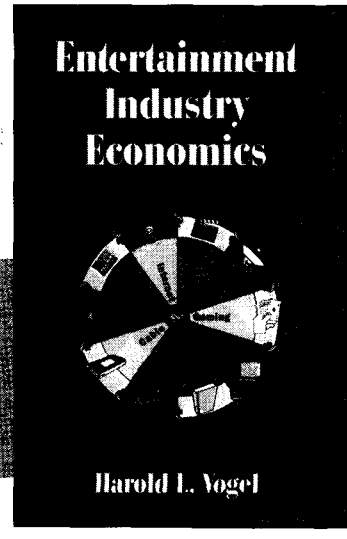


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adherence to principle, precisely when it is most tempting to depart from it.

It should matter that the independent counsel statute is patently unconstitutional. The Constitution vests the entire enforcement power in the President. But the Supreme Court in *Morrison* v. *Olson* upheld the law, lopsidedly, in a particularly wretched opinion. The Court said in effect that if the law left the President with much of the power over law enforcement, that was good enough.

*In practical effect, the independent counsel is what the Democrats intended, an institutionalized wolf on the executive's flank.*

In practical effect, however, the independent counsel is what the Democrats intended, an institutionalized wolf on the executive's flank. Past Democratic Congresses, supposing that Republican control of the White House had become the normal state of affairs, used independent counsels to assault the moral legitimacy of the Presidency. Men who carried out the President's policies or defended his constitutional authority were subjected to lengthy investigations, and sometimes trials, by prosecutors with unlimited resources whose sole mission was to convict. The *in terrorem* effect of the law is magnified many times over because the investigatee can recover part of his attorney's fees only if he is not indicted. If he is indicted, he must pay hundreds of thousands of dollars from his own pocket even if the indictment is eventually dismissed or he is acquitted at trial. Some men accepted plea-bargains simply because they could not carry on a one-sided financial war. The statute has become a powerful engine for injustice.

A system with so much politics, ego, and heavily disproportionate resources built into it requires, but does not always get, an independent counsel of moral strength and judicial temperament. Kenneth Starr is just such a prosecutor. He has proceeded with caution, and those who pleaded guilty to his charges (notably Webster Hubbell) or were convicted (Jim Guy Tucker, the then governor of Arkansas) were faced with overwhelming evidence. It is more than a little sickening to hear the charges leveled against Starr by the White House and its sycophants in the press. The main one seems to be that he is, heaven forfend, a *Republican*. That crime, according to James Carville, automatically makes Ken Starr a "bitter partisan." There was no liberal rage, however, when Archibald Cox, a liberal and a very close ally of Ted Kennedy's, was chosen to investigate Richard Nixon. Nor were there any protests when Lawrence Walsh, using his office in a blatantly political manner, went after Reagan and Bush appointees, even announcing indictments, which he knew to be barred by the lapse of time, of major Republican figures on the eve of the 1992 election. Mr. Starr, by contrast, has conducted himself professionally and without a credible hint of partisanship.

The irony is that we owe this abominable statute to the myth of what *New Republic* editor David Grann casually refers to as "the political connections that corrupted the Justice Department during Watergate." The reality is that there was absolutely no corruption of the Department.

The local U.S. Attorney's Office began making the case against the Watergate conspirators, including the President, and handed the main outlines of that case to the special prosecutor. No attempt, then or later, was made to interfere with the work of the Office of the Special Prosecutor, and the final report of that Office stated that not a day had been lost.

It is time we abandoned the myth of the need for an independent counsel and faced the reality of what that institution has too often become. We must also face another reality. A culture of irresponsibility has grown up around the independent-counsel law. Congress, the press, and regular prosecutors have found it too easy to wait for the appointment of an independent counsel and then to rely upon him rather then pursue their own constitutional and ethical obligations. The mere existence of the statute acts as a shield both for wrongdoers and for those who should be exposing them.

If the statute were allowed to lapse, however, wouldn't some number of official miscreants escape justice? They would. We may doubt that some attorneys general (Janet Reno springs to mind, for some reason) would investigate their own President rigorously. But let us admit where the blame must ultimately rest. The American people elected Bill Clinton twice, knowing that he is a womanizer, a draft dodger, and a liar. The fact is that many Americans appear not to care about morality in government so long as prosperity reigns and the sitcoms continue to roll. If that is our sickness, it will not be cured, it will only be encouraged, by shifting responsibility to the misbegotten device of the independent counsel. □

Bill Clinton in 1998 by Roman Genn



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# *Senator Charged With Humor Harassment*

WASHINGTON, D.C., Feb. 28, 2002—"Practically every evening in 1998, the senator would come into my office and close the door," tearfully recounts a former campaign worker. "He'd look me over, then ask, 'What's green and skates?' I'd answer, 'I don't know, Senator.' And he'd chortle, 'Peggy Phlegm!' "

Washington has been rocked by the accusations of two dozen former employees that Sen. Edmund Noland (D., Alaska) made unwanted humor attempts. Although Congress exempted itself from the Humor Harassment Act of 2001, which expanded upon earlier legislation protecting employees against hostile work environments, the revelations may lead to the resignation of the man re-elected under the slogan "Serious Times Require a Serious Senator."

"It's not about humor, it's about power," explains humor harassment expert Dr. Malachi Bismarck, "the power to inflict your personality on helpless, cringing underlings."

A former aide reveals how hero-worship turned to horror. "I went to work for the senator because he opposes racism, child abuse, world hunger, nuclear winter, global warming, and the coming ice age." But slowly Noland's hidden side emerged. "He loved fake dog-doo and squirting boutonnières. April 1 was an annual nightmare. And he'd start off his dialect jokes with the appropriate Scottish or French accent, then inevitably slide back to his all-purpose Irish brogue by the punchline. If he could remember the punchline. Countless times he told me about the dyslexic agnostic who lies awake at night wondering, 'Is there a God?' Sure, sometimes he told good jokes. But who can remember the funny ones? It's the stinkers that haunt you to the grave."

Sen. Noland's chief of staff, Mardi Ames, defends her boss: "It's all because he outreached to the humor-resistant community years before the humorless won legal protection, back when other senators hired only the humorful. And it's not as if every joke was a dud. Like, there was the one about the three strings who walk into a bar and the first string says . . . Hmmmhh . . . Well, look, can I get back to you on this?"

A sense of betrayal is growing among Noland's supporters. Pulitzer Prize–winning columnist Nina Linblad laments, "Repeatedly, we of the National Organization for the Grim (NOG) have championed some seemingly serious politician, only to be cruelly disillusioned. It must be society's fault."

Humorism activist Bismarck sums up, "We are not against humor. Everybody wants wanted humor, but nobody wants unwanted humor. It's that simple."

Just before press time, Sen. Noland announced that he was checking himself into a Humor Addiction Malady (HAM) clinic, "To learn if my alleged behavior stems from my history of childhood sports abuse. After fifty years of repression, I have only now recovered my buried memory of how my father made me play Little League. I hope my accusers can somehow find it in their hearts to forgive my dad."

—STEVE SAILER

*Mr. Sailer (steveslr@aol.com) is a businessman and writer.*


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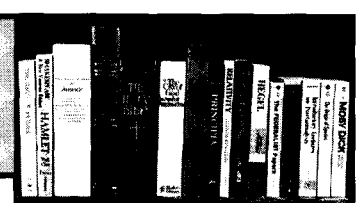

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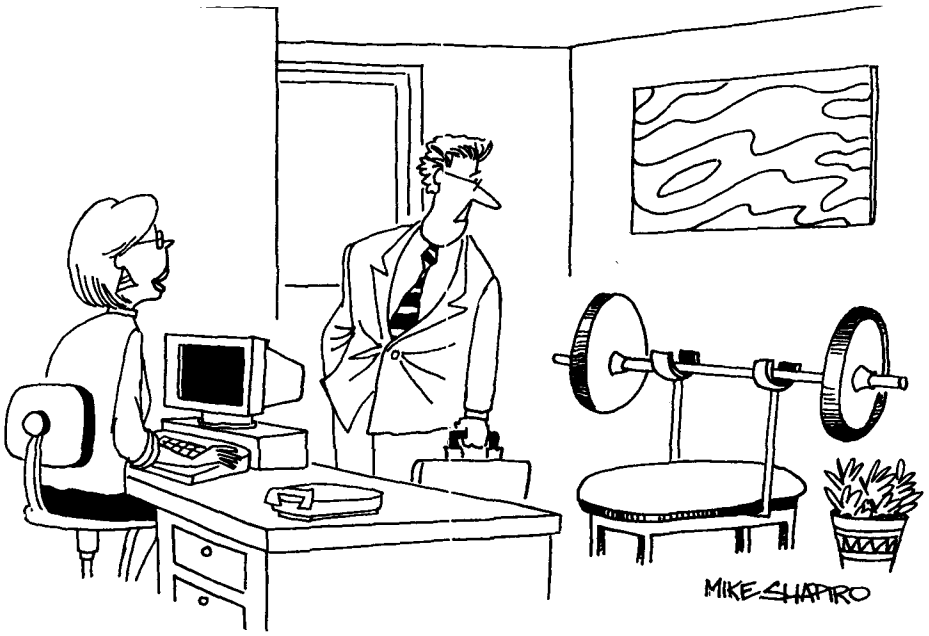
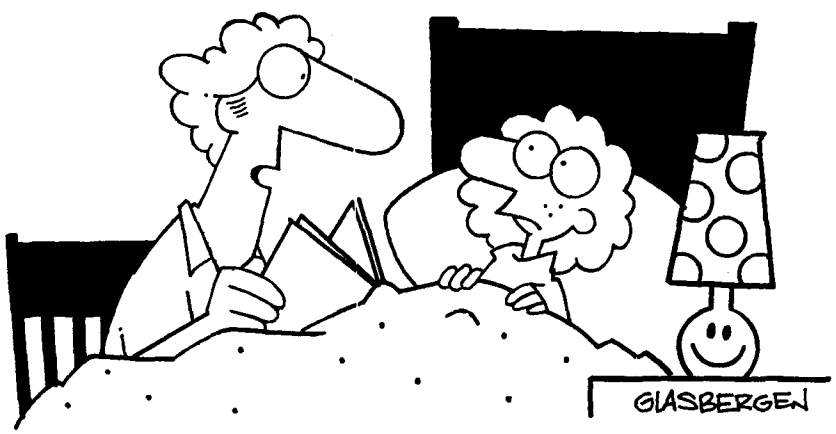



*"Mr. Collins will be with you in a minute. In the meantime, feel free to pump yourself up."*

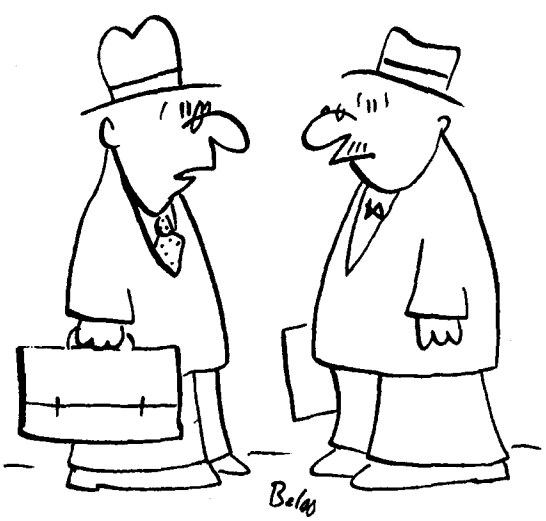
## *Bruce Babbitt's Agony*

*He didn't, like others, cohabit*
*In serial style—like a rabbit.*
*He's not a lounge dude,*
*So one must conclude*
*The Chippewa did it to Babbitt.*

—W. H. von Dreele




*"Hundreds of people saw the cow jump over the moon, but the government says it was just a weather balloon."*




*"It was a very hostile takeover—they're still holding my secretary hostage."*

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A KNOCK CAME AT THE HOTEL SUITE DOOR. GOVERNOR CLINTON BROKE OUT IN A COLD SWEAT. HE FEARED THE WORST. ANOTHER LOWLY FEMALE CLERK HAD COME TO DEMAND SEX. WOULD THIS HARASSMENT NEVER END?!!

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

February 1, 1997

Dear Rusty,

Whoo boy.

I mean, seriously: Yikes.

I'm typing pretty softly now. I have to. Tipper's in bed next to me, and although she's under some pretty heavy sedation (Wednesday morning after the State of the Union she pretty much blew a gasket and flipped out) she's still sleeping lightly. She keeps waking up, thinking that she's hearing the "Presidency in Crisis" theme music on CNN, even though we haven't heard it since Wednesday.

I want to make one thing clear, Rusty: I'm not a fact-finder in this matter. I want you and the independent counsel to know that. But I do have a simple statement that I'd like to make:

My recollection in certain instances I now believe to be faulty. I did not, for instance, see Bill and the young lady in question engaged in what looked to be an amorous encounter in the White House theater. I now believe that what I saw was the young lady in question engaged in some harmless fantasizing with one of those life-sized photo cutouts that are so popular nowadays.

In addition, let me correct an impression that has been reported in the media, erroneously. I did not, as some of you have said, see Bill Clinton and the young lady in question in a compromising position in the Oval Office. I now believe that I saw a young, perhaps over-eager intern, who so desperately wanted to please this President who has done so much for his country that she actually tied his shoelaces for him.

What do you think? I got it from Vernon Jordan, who has been terrific this past week. The "fact-finder" thing is pretty much a foolproof way of avoiding a subpoena, he tells me. So I'm supposed to let everyone know, at every possible instance, that I don't know any facts at all.

The first thing Vernon did when he found me at home locked in my bedroom (I was lying low, Rusty, working on the spirited defense of Bill Clinton I was planning to deliver just after taking the oath of office) was tell me that no matter what happened, Sarah still had a summer job at Revlon.

"I want you to know something else, Sir" Vernon said. "I have always respected and admired you."

"Thanks, Vernon."

"And I want to play golf with you this weekend."

"Sorry, Vernon," I said. "I'm not much of a duffer."

"What do you like to do?" he asked. "Whatever you usually do, that's what I want to do in public with you."

"Hike, look at trees, that sort of thing."

"Sunday, Sir, you will go for a hike with your best friend and presidential confidant."

And with that he shimmered out of the room.

The next few days are kind of fuzzy. On Wednesday, when the new poll numbers came out (Good news, Rusty! Bill's more popular than ever!), Tip and I were watching CNN. Judy Woodruff was in the middle of reporting Bill's latest popularity surge when Tip turned to me and shouted, "Would it kill you to treat me like dirt once in a while?"

"Tipper . . ."

"I'm serious, Al. We've got to do something. Next time we're in public together, why don't you slap me around a bit?"

"Tipper!"

"Just an open-hand sort of thing. Not a closed fist. I say something. You give me a wallop with the back of your hand. It's a scandal. I defend you to the media. Boom! Instant popularity."

"Simmer down, Tipper," I said. "Sarah's in the next room with one of her school friends. Let's not have a scene."

"Sarah's brought one of her friends home?" Tip asked.

"Yes, and they're in the next room, so—"

"Is she hot?"

"Is who hot?" I asked.

"The friend. Sarah's friend. You know what you could do? You could go into the next room, real casual like, tell Sarah I want to see her or something, she goes, it's just you and the little hottie, what happens next happens next. It's a scandal. Media on the front lawn. I defend you. Boom! Instant popularity. What do you think?"

But I was already on the phone to the doctor, asking him to send over some sedatives. This has been a hard week for Tipper. In many ways, I think she's the real victim.

After that, I called my press secretary and released my strongly worded defense of Bill Clinton, omitting the first paragraph, where I thank Chief Justice Rehnquist for swearing me in. And then Vernon Jordan called, canceling our hike. Oh well.

Your pal, Al



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# BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

## Mrs. Eaton's Knocker

FLORENCE KING

GO BACK before Monica Lewinsky, before JFK's harem, before Nan Britton and Warren Harding, and you will find a woman named Peggy Eaton. There the comparison ends, for the tarnished escutcheon in her case was not that of a President recumbent but a President rampant.

It took very little to make Andrew Jackson fly into a rage, but chief among his many sore points was the sanctity of womanhood. As a young frontier lawyer he settled his obsessive chivalry on Rachel Donelson Robards, the estranged wife of the pathologically jealous Lewis Robards, whose mother ran the boardinghouse where Jackson lived. Rachel helped her sympathetic mother-in-law with the work, but her friendly, outgoing manner with the boarders so enraged her unstable husband that he deserted her. He claimed that he had gotten a divorce, but in fact he had only petitioned the legislature. The decree did not become final until Rachel and Andrew Jackson had been married for two years.

*The Petticoat Affair: Manners, Mutiny, and Sex in Andrew Jackson's White House, by John F. Marszalek (Simon & Schuster, 296 pp., $25)*

They went through a second ceremony but Jackson's political enemies never forgot. He fought two duels over Rachel's honor, killing one man, and tried futilely to shield her against the slurs of adulteress and prostitute heaped on her in the vicious presidential election of 1828. He won the election, but a month later Rachel had a fatal heart attack, leaving this most uxorious of men to be inaugurated as a widower seething with unspent rage at scandalmongers.

The epitaph on Rachel's tomb, "A being so gentle and virtuous that slander might wound but could not dishonor," was written by Jackson's political ally and surrogate son, Sen. John Henry Eaton, slated to be his Secretary of War, who had just married a pretty young Washington widow named Margaret O'Neale Timberlake.

Roman Genn

Peggy O'Neale had started life sitting on the laps of the politicians who lived at her family's boardinghouse and drank at their adjacent tavern. The proverbial cute kid who sings and dances for guests, she liked being the center of male attention and by 14 had broken her first heart: a nephew of the Secretary of the Navy attempted suicide out of unrequited love for her. After causing a couple of fights between young officers she tried to elope with an aide to Gen. Winfield Scott, but her father caught her as she climbed out the window. At 16 she enchanted a naval purser, John Timberlake, who proposed the day he met her. Anxious by now to get her safely married, her parents agreed to the match and the young couple wed in 1816.

Buxom and russet-haired, Peggy helped out at the boardinghouse and tavern, joining in the political talk with the ease of a woman used to large numbers of men. Her open manner made her a special favorite of Sen. Andrew Jackson, who boarded at O'Neale's, as did Tennessee's other senator, John Eaton, a friend of Timberlake's who had promised to look after her while her husband was at sea. He kept his word; they were seen together socially.

In April 1828 Timberlake died suddenly aboard ship off the coast of Spain. The first vague reports said he was felled by a "fever" but it soon came out that he had cut his own throat. Rumors flew, gathering steam when Eaton and the inconsolable widow of eight months were married with Jackson's blessing on New Year's Day, 1829.

The scandal became official when Peggy called on the Vice President's wife and Mrs. John Calhoun did not return the call. All of the other Washington ladies followed suit, including the other Cabinet wives, and even Jackson's niece and official hostess, Emily Donelson, who snubbed Mrs. Secretary of War Eaton at the Inaugural Ball.

Next, an unctuous Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Ezra Stiles Ely, wrote Jackson that Peggy's two daughters had been fathered by Eaton, not Timberlake, and that she had had a miscarriage while Timberlake was at sea. Rising to the bait, Jackson demanded to know the source of the miscarriage rumor. He had heard it, Ely said, from another Presbyterian minister, the Rev. John Campbell. Jackson summoned Campbell to the White House and grilled him until he confessed that he had heard the story from a Dr. Elijah Craven, who had since died. Fleeing Jackson's presence, Campbell hired a lawyer—Francis Scott Key—to depose Dr. Craven's widow. Meanwhile, some old lady told him that *she*

*Miss King is the author of* The Florence King Reader *and other books.*

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had heard that Peggy delivered twins during Timberlake's absence.

Morphing this new, faux Rachel onto the image of his beloved wife, Jackson bombarded the Navy with demands for records and affidavits on the dates of Timberlake's voyages. Worried by the way affairs of state were being ignored, Alexander Hamilton's son told Martin Van Buren, "We did not make him President to work the miracle of making Mrs. Eaton an honest woman."

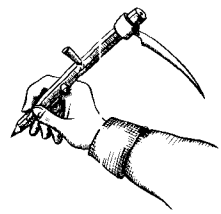
With the Timberlake file in hand, a now-molten Jackson ordered his Cabinet and both Presbyterian divines to the White House where they sat in terrified silence as he roared: "She is as chaste as a virgin!"

Far from settling matters, the unprecedented Cabinet meeting only made them worse. Henry Clay quipped: "Age cannot wither her nor custom stale her infinite virginity." The number of Peggy's alleged lovers rose to two dozen. John Eaton challenged Campbell to a duel. Postmaster General Ingham accused Eaton's aides of plotting to assassinate him. Jackson threatened the Dutch ambassador after a perceived snub of Peggy by his wife. Mrs. Stephen Decatur, widow of the naval hero, received an anonymous letter. The Navy investigated Timberlake's handling of government funds and found a scapegoat in another purser, who committed the first assault on a President when he twisted Jackson's nose.

*Go back before Monica Lewinsky, before JFK's harem, before Nan Britton and Warren Harding, and you will find a woman named Peggy Eaton.*

L'Affaire Eaton ended with the resignation of the entire Cabinet in 1831. The uproar had consumed the first two years of Jackson's Administration, during which time the Nat Turner rebellion and the birth of the abolitionist movement had gone unnoticed by all save John Calhoun, whose break with Jackson was also a break with nationalism. Resigning the Vice Presidency and returning to the Senate freed him to develop his secessionist doctrines of Nullification and States Rights, lending dark irony to the sobriquet of "Peggy of Troy."

*The Petticoat Affair* is one of those books that irritates even as it engrosses. The author, John F. Marszalek, a history professor at Mississippi State, is so bent on improving Peggy's image that he insists upon calling her "Margaret." Peggy, he decided, "played into the preconceptions"—i.e., it sounds like a hussy—but Margaret "gives readers a chance to look at her from a fresh point of view so they can evaluate the information about her more objectively." Thoughtful, perhaps, but too close to the current practice of renaming schools for my taste.



He also makes too many solemn pronouncements in praise of her liberated instincts—"daring to live her life as she pleased in ways considered improper," etc. This is probably a wise move for a male in today's feminist-dominated academia but it skirts the obvious: Peggy was a narcissist who made herself the center of male attention with woman's time-honored ploy of "Let's you and him fight."

Marszalek redeems himself, however, in a passage about the importance of returning social calls when he quotes the priceless double entendre by the nineteenth-century historian James Parton, who wrote in 1861: "The political history of the United States for the last thirty years dates from the moment when the soft hand of Mr. Van Buren touched Mrs. Eaton's knocker." □

# Disney, We Hardly Knew Ye

JAMES BOWMAN

STEVEN Watts is rather a Ludwig von Drake of a biographer for Walt Disney. Like Disney's egg-headed duck, Watts is a professor (at the University of Missouri) with a tendency to over-explain the obvious,

***The Magic Kingdom: Walt Disney and the American Way of Life, by Steven Watts (Houghton Mifflin, 526 pp., $30)***

though he often manages to be interesting and informative along the way. He knows his subject thoroughly, can write about it readably, and has packed lots of new and useful information into this volume. As a self-confessed Disney fan since childhood, Watts shows real sympathy for the man who, he says, became a "symbol of postwar America and its values"—even though Watts himself is predictably disapproving toward many of those values. Perhaps this is the most we can hope for from any book by a present-day academic. But it may just be worth looking at what this unusually good example of the style and world view associated with life in the academic hothouse reveals about the limitations of that life.

For today even the biography of a popular entertainer comes equipped with the *apparatus criticus* of the ideologue. Watts's struggle through a tangle of "isms," including "Sentimental Populism," "Sentimental Modernism," "Libertarian Populism," even "producerism" —presumably though scarcely imaginably the complementary ideology to "consumerism"—culminates in what he calls "The Disney Doctrine." It is with some disappointment that we realize that this amounts to little more than an assertion of the importance of families. Is this really a "doctrine"? Well, it is in the hyperideologized world of 1990s academia, where a plethora of "isms" has forced even basic human activities like marriage and childbearing into the ideological mold. When we all acknowledge what the theorists of such anti-family ideologies as feminism and "queer studies" claim has always been the case—that it is a political act to start a family—then the theorists have won home-field advantage in the "debate" over such "patriarchal" relationships.

But Watts needs to formulate some kind of "Disney Doctrine" even to be intelligible, one suspects, to many of his fellow intellectuals, and so he takes it where he can find it. Thus, Walt Dis-

*Mr. Bowman is American Editor of the* Times Literary Supplement.



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ney's praise of "hard-working and sympathetic mothers" among the birds in one of his nature films, of "family devotion and parental care," seems to suggest "that like many Americans in the postwar era, Disney had become preoccupied by family issues in thinking about social cohesion." Even something so basic to the human condition as a cheerfully optimistic attitude is ideologized here. Disney's *Pollyanna* is said to have "pushed a version of positive thinking, the popular socioreligious philosophy associated with one of the great moral icons of cold-war America, Norman Vincent Peale." Criminey! Even Monty Python urged us to "Look on the Bright Side of Life."

Not surprisingly, the most fruitful source of potential Disneyism is to be found in old Walt's patriotism, which becomes an "ism" in this more limited sense as he is cast in the role of cold-war supporter. As do so many academics in the post-Vietnam era, Watts sees love of country in the old-fashioned sense—the sense in which your country's quarrels automatically become your quarrels—as a kind of right-wing excess, characteristic of the Frightening Fifties. This was a time when, as Watts puts it, "a warm, comforting blanket of nondenominational spirituality was draped over the consensus of pragmatic politics, abundance, and personal fulfillment," and "pious Americans pictured themselves standing shoulder to shoulder against the forces of godless Communism." Of course, merely to conjure up such a picture is to provoke a sneer from the promoters of the very different "consensus" of our own times.

Yet they have a point too. Watts begins his chapter on "Disney and Domestic Security" by citing the view of Stephen J. Whitfield's *Culture of the Cold War* (1991) that "The search to define and affirm a way of life, the need to express and celebrate the meaning of 'Americanism,' was the flip side of stigmatizing Communism." In one sense, at least, this is true, for all the not-so-well-hidden Leftism suggested by the word "stigmatizing." (Just because the Communists of the Soviet Union and China were killing their fellow citizens by the million, hey, that's no reason to "stigmatize" them.) For Walt Disney's eagerness to join the ideological fray on the side of a factitious "Americanism" against both Nazism and Communism produced a tendency toward propaganda in his entertainments of the 1940s and 1950s that has survived him and is still going strong in the Michael Eisner era—now that the thin gruel of "Americanism" has given way to a toxic stew of feminism, environmentalism, and multiculturalism.

*Adolescent Simba in* The Lion King *confronts wicked Uncle Scar with the moral sophistries we might expect from a sophomore at Oberlin.*

Disney's successors in the years since his death in 1966 lie outside Watts's brief, but in a way he misses the point about his subject by omitting them. For all his stress on Walt Disney as an entrepreneur of genius—it wasn't the Mouseketeers but the Marketeers who made him what he was—he leaves out of consideration the man's greatest marketing triumph. For the real test of his achievement in being the first to figure out how to turn art and entertainment into commodities lay in the assembly line's continuing to crank them out successfully when he was no longer there to supervise it. This has happened, and the transition has proved as natural for Disney, Inc., as for Ford, Inc., or any other manufactory which has survived its founder. We may prefer the wholesome *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* to the anodyne political correctness of *Pocahontas*, but the process designed to produce the one was essentially the same as that which produced the other.

It is this commodification of culture, not vaguely conservative political leanings, which is the real essence of the Disneyist ideology. And its effects have devastated the imaginative faculties of its little consumers. For in the processing of its raw materials—the myths, legends, fairy tales, and classic novels it converts into animated films and merchandising megabucks—the Disney operation must extract from them anything that is genuinely strange or frightening to children. And it is our earliest encounters with the strange and the frightening which shape our imaginative lives. In films like *Aladdin* or *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* or *Hercules*, the villains are comic grotesques whom even the youngest children can't take seriously, while the heroes and heroines, for all their allegedly exotic provenance, are indistinguishable from American teenagers of the upper and middle socioeconomic orders. The Little Mermaid talks to her gruff but kindhearted daddy just as any 17-year-old from Scarsdale does to hers; adolescent Simba in *The Lion King* confronts wicked Uncle Scar with the moral sophistries we might expect from a sophomore at Oberlin.

Walt Disney seems on the basis of Steven Watts's book to have been a decent and patriotic American who did his admirable bit to keep the Communists out of Hollywood. But what he let in when he first taught the industry to reduce genuine imaginative experiences to the bland sameness required for mass marketing may in the end prove to be as great a danger to the well-being of the country he loved. □

# The Devil's Own

RICHARD BROOKHISER

JOHN Lukacs, the historian of the Second World War and much else, is a complex talent. He ranges wide, and sits at home (home being Central Europe, though he has lived here for decades). His great strengths and his weaknesses appear in each of these characteristic modes.

Ideas are a trap for him. He will pick up a thought as hard as biscotti, and fuss with it until it turns back into batter. Never look too hard at the shuffling

***The Hitler of History*, by John Lukacs (Knopf, 279 pp., $26)**

qualifications in his paragraphs—you will get dizzy. On the other hand, he has a fine sensibility, which enables him to observe and evoke cultural and social



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scenes in places ranging from Budapest to Philadelphia. He has written little vignettes of American life that are so true and right they make you laugh out loud—which inspires confidence in his takes on other people and places.

But the first job of historians is to tell stories (not necessarily the most important job, to be Lukacsian for a moment, but the first job). Lukacs's grasp of his material is weakest when he is furthest from his personal ground zero. On the cold war, or anything in the Pacific or west of the Alleghenies, he is not reliable. He writes best about his two favorite figures, Churchill and Roosevelt, when he details their wartime partnership—less well when he touches on other aspects of their careers. When he deals with the hot core of World War II, all cylinders are firing. He has written this particular book a number of times. The best version is probably the first, *The Last European War, 1939–1941*. But *The Hitler of History* is a close second.

*Hitler for John Lukacs is the hero of World War II, in the sense in which Satan is the hero of* Paradise Lost.

Hitler for him is the hero of World War II, in the sense in which Satan is the hero of *Paradise Lost*. Like Satan, Hitler puts the story in motion. Their vices (pride for Satan, hatred for Hitler) impelled them to act, and their virtues enabled them to act as effectively as they did. Like Satan, Hitler is cool. Satan's style appears in his language, Hitler's in paraphernalia—rallies, autobahns, leather. Historians and poets who, like Lukacs and Milton, are moralists, must respond to these facts, even as they judge them.

The subject of this book is the different portraits that historians and biographers have drawn of Hitler, from the Thirties on. The occasion for it is the *Historikerstreit*, or Historians' Quarrel, a dispute provoked in the mid Eighties among German historians by those who wished, in Martin Broszat's words, to move from the "demonization" to the "historicization" of Hitler and National Socialism. This desire, unexceptionable in itself—what can history tell us about demons?—degenerated into polemics about the relative immorality of Communism and Nazism; for some writers, notably the English journalist David Irving, it developed into outright admiration for Hitler.

Lukacs is harsh on Irving's arguments, and his scholarship: "One of the rhetorical habits of ideological advocates is their emphatic use of adverbs and adjectives, which they employ not as qualifiers but [as] rhetorical substitutes for evidence." Irving's copious footnotes, which are meant to testify to his industrious burrowing in German sources, often refer to other matters, or to nothing at all. Lukacs himself believes in "historicization," though he insists that this increases the moral responsibility of Hitler, and of his supporters. "For a 'satanic apparition,'" Lukacs quotes the Austrian historian Friedrich Heer, "no one is responsible—at best, an exorcist. . . . This 'satanic apparition' was a very concrete human incarnation who . . . was promoted and helped into power by very responsible and notable men."

He was also maintained in power by popular support. Though he came to office by close elections and backstairs maneuvers, he soon struck most Germans as giving them what they wanted, a conviction they shared almost until the end. "As late as March 1945," Lukacs writes, Albert "Speer was driven to despair as he overheard the talk of German workers who, unlike himself, were still confident . . . of victory." Lukacs sees Hitler as a prototype, "the first of Antichrist-like popular figures" in the age of the masses. "The Antichrist will not be horrid and devilish," but "smiling, generous, popular, an idol, adored by masses of people because of the sunny prosperity he seems to have brought, a false father (or husband) to his people."

Whence arose Hitler's hatred for Jews? Lukacs dismisses some psychobiographical explanations, then toys with another: that Hitler thought his father was the illegitimate son of a Jewish man. This rumor, which circulated during Hitler's lifetime, is probably false. What matters is whether Hitler believed it, especially since he seems to have hated and feared his father (his statements in *Mein Kampf* to the contrary notwithstanding). Hitler claimed that his ideology, including his anti-Semitism, was learned in Vienna; Lukacs inclines toward those historians (including Churchill) who believed that his experience of the 1919 Munich Soviet and its suppression was decisive.

Hitler's career was a failure; all the major results of his war, from an occupied Berlin to the founding of Israel, were the opposite of his intentions. But his career may not be over. Lukacs, on thin ice, treads gingerly. One of the "most important and potentially fruitful intellectual achievement[s]" of the nineteenth century was the reaction of "a romantic (and often sentimental and categorical) idealism" against "the materialism (and often against the rationalism) of the Enlightenment." This countermovement "was mostly represented and exemplified by Germans; and then it was carried by some of them to extremes, to a deterministic idealism that proved to be more inhumane than the deterministic materialism that had preceded" it. "And an incarnation" of that extreme "was Adolf Hitler." In other words: Hitler let down his side. But his side may rise again. Without, we must work and pray, him. □

*Mr. Brookhiser is a senior editor at* NR.

## *MANNERS*

# Strip Clubs *v.* Darwinism

DAVID KLINGHOFFER

MATERIALISM can mean buying a $23,000 Rolex. But in a philosophical context it means a world view where only material reality counts, an outlook which denies that human existence has a spiritual component, and certainly denies the religious outlook in which existence is all spirit with material reality thrown in mainly to confuse us. Two famous examples of

*Mr. Klinghoffer is* NR*'s literary editor.*



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materialism in ideological form are Marxism and Darwinism, both of which maintain that ultimately life can be explained in terms of molecules bumping up against one another.

Most of the passionate advocates of Marxism and Darwinism are on college campuses, but you find philosophical materialism elsewhere too. In fact, it would appear to find its perfect expression in the Body Shop, a strip joint on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood. But as the silicone-buoyed torsos of the naked women there amply testify, appearances can be deceiving. Here is a mystery for you.

I visited the Body Shop recently in connection with the bachelor party of an old friend. (I note a defensive tone creeping in here.) Eleven guys were staying in two motel rooms a distance down Sunset. After we had been sitting around and drinking for a while, a collective decision was made to take a walk. We passed the Body Shop (not to be confused with the PC cosmetics chain), and the collectivity decided to go in. I could tell you that I would have preferred to keep walking, which is true, but you probably wouldn't believe me, so what's the point? Anyway, I would have seemed like a killjoy if I'd gone back to the motel by myself, and so I paid the $15 cover charge and went in.

As such places go, the Body Shop is a high-class establishment. In California, a strip joint can feature full nudity only on the condition that no liquor is served. So our group ordered Diet Cokes and Perrier waters and sat down.

The crowd was impressively sober. There were men alone, men in pairs, here and there a guy with a date, and a disproportionate number of Asians. A respectful hush was maintained throughout—no stamping, hooting, or whistling, which compared favorably with many Manhattan movie theaters.

The room is mirrored but dark, except for spotlights illuminating the runways. With your fizzy water or soft drink before you, you sit at a curved version of those long, thin tables that panel speakers at conferences sit behind. Between the tables are the runways, so that you face other men while you wait for the girls to go by.

One by one they emerge from behind a velvet curtain and strut dispassionately down the runway. Flawless in an unreal way and uniformly tanned, their bodies say, "Sex," but their faces, all masked by the same expression of total boredom,


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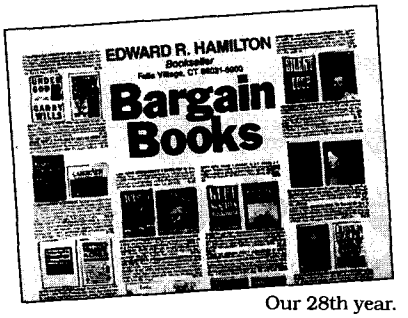


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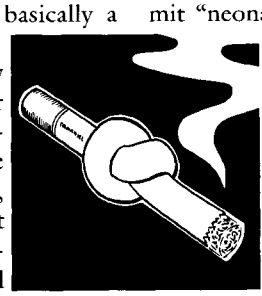
say, "Check, please." The guys aren't bored. A couple of Asians seated across and a few feet up from me look on as if stunned, the mouth of one of them hanging open in a way people's mouths normally do only in cartoons. At the end of the runway, there's a fire pole, and the girl generally climbs up on the pole and swings around it a couple of times.

Then she struts back to where she came from, every foot or two bending to pick up the dollar tips which the guys leave next to their ginger ale. If you don't leave a tip—something one of my companions thought he could get away with—you receive a dressing-down from the stripper. "What's the matter? You're not tipping. Hey, that's the way I make my living."

There are two ground rules here. One is, no booze. The other, no touching. Actually, some touching does occur. For $25 you can get a "lap dance" performed on you. As one member of our party explained 15 minutes after setting down that amount for the service, this means you go in a back room with one of the girls and she squirms around on your lap for a while. Don't get any dirty ideas about this. None of the man's clothes are removed or unzipped. No hands are employed. One assumes that if the customer takes any liberties, large muscled men, probably with mustaches, are waiting in an adjacent room, ready to swing into immediate action. So you sit there and experience the frustration as it mounts. It appears to be basically a form of self-torture.



Here is where the mystery comes in. It's hard to enter the Body Shop a philosophical materialist and exit in the same condition. Obviously, lots of men enjoy gazing at naked girls who are in excellent physical shape. And enough enjoy lap dances to justify strip clubs in offering them. I don't pretend to ask this question from the perspective of a detached observer. But trying to take as detached a view as possible of human sexual perversity, why do we enjoy this sort of thing?

Darwinism informs us that every aspect of our physiological being—including the neuron connections in the brain that make men want to visit strip clubs—developed in one way only: random mutations in the gene pool sorted through by natural selection, a process with no intelligence in control but a single criterion guiding it. That criterion is the survival of the human race. Whatever traits increase the chances of survival are retained. Whatever don't, are dropped. Period.

Consider a typical example of Darwinian thinking. In a controversial article last fall in *The New York Times Magazine*, Professor Steven Pinker of MIT tried to explain the evolutionary logic of killing your own newborn baby. Accused baby-killers like the "supposedly callous" Melissa Drexler are only doing what comes naturally. In the course of evolutionary history, primitive women often killed their babies if the babies, for health or other reasons, didn't seem to have much of a chance of surviving to adulthood. Doing so freed the mothers to concentrate their efforts on raising the healthier children to whom they had given or would give birth, thus increasing the prospects of human survival on the whole. The willingness to commit "neonaticide" was thus selected for by nature and retained.

*It's hard to enter a strip club like the Body Shop as a philosophical materialist and exit in the same condition.*

That makes a kind of twisted sense (though some of the specifics of Mr. Pinker's argument have been debunked by Andrew Ferguson in *The Weekly Standard*). But when it comes to explaining another feature of human makeup, Darwinism runs into a brick wall covered with girlie posters.

While I was in California, the *Los Angeles Times* mentioned the passage of a state law against Peeping Toms. Evidently the problem of Peeping Toms is on the rise in the Golden State. An assemblyman from San Diego fought for and got passed a requirement that, for a second Peeping offense, the guilty party receive a year in jail, up from six months previously; to qualify for probation, a convicted Tom must undergo "counseling."

I thought about that as I sipped Perrier at the Body Shop. I asked the guy sitting next to me if he was enjoying the show. Yeah, he said, he liked it all right, though not as much as he enjoys the glimpse he'll now and then catch of a girl across the street from his apartment. Framed by a spotless picture window, she makes her bed each morning in the nude.

Among forms of human perversity, the sexual kind tends to be the most perverse. Other varieties—greed, violence—can help propagate the species. Greed can drive a successful career that creates livelihoods for others. War is often necessary to establish long-lasting peace, saving lives in the long run. A Darwinian can explain all of these. However, with exceptions—like adultery—one thing the various forms of sexual perversity have in common is that they add nothing to the prospects for our biological survival.

Just the opposite, in fact. Voyeurism, pornography, homosexuality have nothing to do with procreation. As a colleague points out, statisticians have found that the best predictor of a healthy heterosexual appetite in men is . . . an enthusiasm for watching lesbians go at it (a fact of purely scientific interest, he assures me). If you are satisfying your sexual impulse in a way that precludes the creation of new life, then the odds increase that you're not going to make any babies. The evolution of our desire to do things like go to the Body Shop actually works against the purpose of evolution.

Of course true believers in Darwinism could respond that voyeurism and pornography function as sexual warm-up exercises, preludes to the main event which heighten the desire for intercourse, thus advancing the goal of procreation. Darwinism is convenient that way. Whatever counterinstances you offer, its devotees will stretch the theory to take them into account, thereby, in their minds, increasing its plausibility. They are a lot like those Freudians who view skepticism toward their own ideology as a form of "resistance," a neurotic symptom confirming the need for psychoanalysis. In the hard sciences such elasticity in a theory is generally regarded as a fatal flaw, not a strength. In this case, practically speaking, it happens that voyeurism and pornography are almost invariably substitutes for sexual intercourse. And this leaves aside homosexual activity, which by definition can't lead to procreation.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In Darwinian terms, sexual perversity just doesn't compute. And for a totalizing ideology that claims to illuminate the origin of everything that we are as human beings, that's troubling. One version or another of Darwin's theory is the only even halfway convincing materialistic explanation anyone has proposed as to how man appeared on earth as he is. If there is one aspect of our makeup that didn't come about by evolution, and this certainly sounds like one, then that opens the door to the possibility of a non-natural—that is, supernatural—explanation. So add perverse sexual desires to the lengthening list of things that Darwinism can't make sense of today and probably never will, from cell structure to the fossil record.

But there needn't be any mystery here. After all, God made day and He made night. He set our impulses in us, good and evil. If we have the *desire* to indulge less-than-elevated instincts, the responsibility is ultimately His. If we go ahead and indulge them, it's ours. He made the conditions for the existence of something like the Body Shop. If I pay the cover charge, in a metaphysical sense, it comes out of my wallet. □

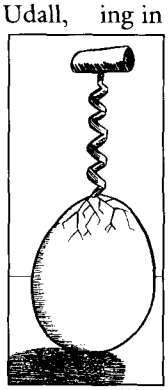
## *FILM*

# One out of Four Ain't Bad

JOHN SIMON

JAMES L. Brooks is a producer/director/writer out of television who knows exactly how to make crowds laugh or cry or, better yet, do both at once. He has not always been successful, but with films such as *Terms of Endearment* and *Broadcast News* the great manipulator proved his mettle. He does it again with ***As Good as It Gets***.

This is a comedy about Melvin Udall, a writer of popular romances, an obsessive-compulsive, and a total misanthrope. He cannot step on cracks between pavement squares; hates women, blacks, homosexuals, animals, and people in general with equal comic ferocity; and eats his regular artery-hardening breakfast at a coffee shop where Carol Connelly, alone among the waitresses, can endure his sarcastic tirades. She is the overprotective single mother of asthmatic young Spencer, of whom her easygoing mother, Beverly, takes care when Carol is at work.



Melvin's favorite butts are Simon Nye, the young homosexual painter who lives across the hall; Simon's black, homosexual art dealer, Frank Sachs, tough enough to crimp Melvin's style somewhat; and Verdell, Simon's pet Brussels griffon. At film's start, Melvin, annoyed by Verdell's yapping, throws the pooch down the garbage chute. But you cannot worry over the fate of a bowwow in American movies, where, unlike in Oliver Goldsmith's famous poem, dog is even more sacred than mom.

Can you, my friends, guess what happens next? You may not predict that Simon will be roughed up by rough trade (those nasty straight hustlers who sometimes beat up their gay clients), resulting in hospitalization and slow recovery. Or that Melvin will end up driving him down to Baltimore, where his conventional, estranged parents live, or that Carol will come along on the trip. But you will guess that Melvin and Carol will start falling in love until he dumbly spoils it all—and perhaps even that Simon's painter's block will vanish when Carol poses for him nude in the trio's hotel suite. What you will surely foretell is that, after all sorts of tribulations, all will turn out for the best for everyone.

How could it be otherwise when Melvin pays for a specialist's house call at Spencer's bedside, a privilege nowadays reserved for billionaires? You will, in any case, not worry for Spencer; kids, to be sure, have come to grief in Hollywood products, but not ones of this type, where the comedy is about as good as it gets. The dialogue is lively, often bitingly funny, in this screenplay by Mark Andrus and Brooks, whose direction jolts as well as it tickles. And

*Mr. Simon is NR's film critic.*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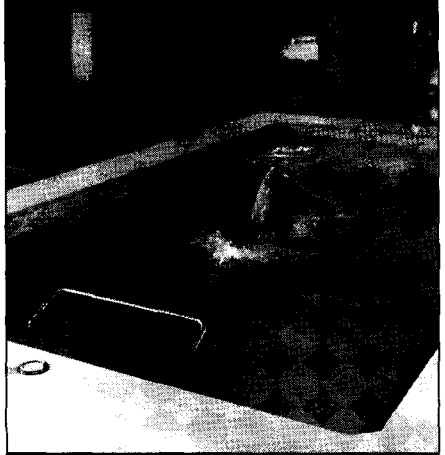

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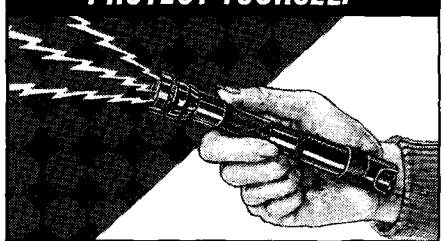

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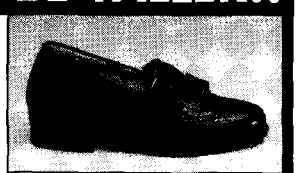

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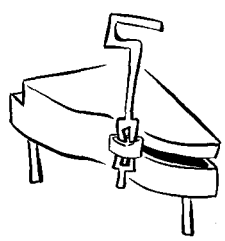
obsessive-compulsive disorder lends itself to all kinds of sight gags—is, indeed, the most cinegenic of ailments.

As enacted by Jack Nicholson, Melvin is, you may be sure, as lovable as he is hateful. Oh, those squinty eyes aglitter with deviltry; that high-pitched, nerve-fraying drawl that not only inflicts wounds but also twists a smile inside them; those somewhat bestial good looks! Everything about Nicholson makes you love hating him, and not even begrudge him the girl.

And what a girl! Helen Hunt, inheriting the part relinquished by Holly Hunter (the hunt, I guess, is of the essence), gives a great comic performance in the Irene Dunne–Carole Lombard tradition. Her Carol, more sexy than pretty, is both nervy and nervous, fiercely female and meltingly feminine, gloriously fusing the natural with the histrionic.

Greg Kinnear (Simon), Cuba Gooding Jr. (Frank), and Shirley Knight (Beverly) lend impeccable support, and John Bailey's camera supplies oodles of colorfulness. Final praise must go to the six canines who played Verdell, with Timer doing most of the donkey work and Jill most of the star turns. The transition from Verdell's dreading Melvin to infuriatingly loving him more than his master is magisterially managed, whether by one dog or six. I wouldn't be surprised if Brussels became as famed for its griffons as for its sprouts.



■ Based on Peter Carey's Booker Prize–winning novel, ***Oscar and Lucinda*** deals with two eccentric redheads—an Anglican priest from rural England and a rich woman industrialist from Australia who fall, however unconsciously, in love on board ship to Sydney. Besides hair color, they have in common their love of glass (he merely collects it, she also manufactures it) and passion for gambling. She enjoys losing big chunks of her fortune at cards in Sydney's dingy gambling dens; he avidly bets on horses and always wins but, like a good priest, bestows his ill-gotten gains on the needy.

I skip over Oscar's brutalized childhood and Lucinda's cosseted one; also Lucinda's buying Sydney's premier glassworks in partnership with the cultivated Rev. Dennis Hasset, who, secretly in love with Lucinda, buries himself in a remote New South Wales parish. Nor will I itemize the stages of Oscar and Lucinda's slow-motion platonic love affair. Then comes the craziest twist in this relentlessly quirky tale.

Hasset's outback parish needs a church, so Oscar and Lucinda decide to supply one made of glass. Oscar bets Lucinda that he will be able to transport it to that remote outpost. Much of the route is by river, which complicates matters, what with Oscar's phobic fear of water, deriving from his childhood. Mind you, this is a tale from the distant past, narrated in voiceover by the great-grandson of Oscar and Lucinda, even though the two never married and only cohabited once. Humph!

If all this doesn't put you off, and you have a craving to see a glass church sail down a wilderness river—and can live with one of the most preposterous endings in cinematic history—by all means catch Gillian Armstrong's latest, with a screenplay by Laura Jones, who also perpetrated Jane Campion's dismal *Portrait of a Lady*. Miss Armstrong can direct, and she has a good cast. Ciarán Hinds persuades as the repressed Hasset, Cate Blanchett is winningly mercurial as Lucinda, but I have nagging doubts about the Oscar of Ralph Fiennes. He manages to be, rightly, both nerdy and ardent, spindly and surprisingly persistent, as unmatinee-idolish as they come. But there is something about this carrot-topped leprechaun that I boggle at. Perhaps the absurdity of the whole thing.

■ I am always uneasy when Hollywood takes on religion. Robert Duvall had nurtured ***The Apostle*** for years till he could write, produce, direct, and star in it. A womanizing Southern Pentecostal preacher who in a fit of jealousy kills his lonely wife's lover with a baseball bat, he gets a church in another town. He becomes steadily more popular and is about to start an affair with another attractive woman when, through his wife's ministrations, the law catches up with him. The point, I suppose, is that God works in mysterious ways, and a sinner can be a charismatic preacher. But why two such charmers as Farrah Fawcett and Miranda Richardson would fall for Duvall, creepy as he has become, would defy even divine omniscience.

*In* Fallen, *a demon spouts Syrian-Aramaic at cops, who take it for Dutch. I take the whole thing for double Dutch.*

■ Nick Kazan (Elia's screenwriter son) has written ***Fallen***, which Gregory Hoblit (*Primal Fear*) has directed. A detective (Denzel Washington) chases an evil force that turns out to be Azazel, one of many fallen angels who, it seems, can hop from body to body. Azazel likes corn flakes in each of his sundry murderous manifestations, which is altogether understandable; but that they all should sing the Stones' "Time Is on My Side" at the detective—and us—is carrying demonism too far. The detective enlists the help of a beautiful but scared professor of theology (Embeth Davidtz) whose murky family past ties her, too, to Azazel. In one of his manifestations, he spouts Syrian-Aramaic at the cops, who take it for Dutch; I take the whole

## *FISH & GAME*

# Lullaby of Birdland

ANDREW OLIVER

FOR many years I have kept a parakeet named Eliza—for Eliza Doolittle, since she too was supposed to learn how to speak. And so when an Icelandic friend of mine proposed a trip to Iceland to hunt ptarmigan, I was a bit uneasy. But then, for many years I have also harbored a vision

*Mr. Oliver is* NR*'s articles editor.*



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of hiking across the heath with a pocket full of shot behind the sniffing dogs waiting for the birds to break. So I agreed.

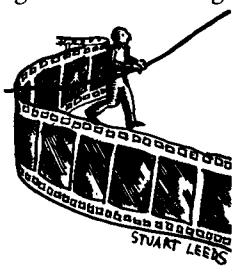
It is said that St. Brendan sailed near the island in the sixth century and, seeing the flames from the volcanoes, called to his men, "We are at Hell's gates. My sons, let us flee from this place. Up with the sails and row as fast as you can!" The Keflavik airport is less forbidding. In fact, everything has been arranged. Our guide, Arni Baldursson, and his dogs Kara and Mossie collect us and we set out on the four-and-a-half-hour drive to the north.

The road tracks the shoreline, more or less. As we head up the coast we drive up and down fjords, flanked by watery gloom to our left and heavy hills to our right. Though the Sagas speak of a tree-covered land, Iceland is now barren—so barren, in fact, that the astronauts trained here before they went to the moon. The Vikings may have used the wood for fuel, or perhaps the sheep they brought munched on the saplings. In any case, nothing but fields and an occasional patch of woody brush remain, so that Icelanders now joke: If you get lost in an Icelandic forest, stand up.

We stop twice to stock up on provisions, and to sample lamb hot-dogs served Icelandic-style—with sautéed onions and honey mustard. Then we pile back into the car. As we pass by the white farmhouses with red roofs, Arni talks lovingly about the ptarmigan—*rjúpa* in Icelandic. "It's such a beautiful bird," he says. "So white." In the summer, he explains, the feathers are a speckled brown, like those of other grouse, so that the bird can hide in the brush. But with the snowfall, the feathers turn, and the birds fly up to the snowline, just high enough so that the snow hides them but not their food. Then Arni remembers a recent evening with his wife. "She was in a sentimental mood, you know, but I didn't realize it. She asked me, 'How can you shoot these beautiful birds when they are flying?' I said without thinking, 'I just aim a meter and a half in front.'"

But the ptarmigan aren't special only for their wardrobe. Their feathered feet make them truly unusual, and eminently suited for the Arctic winter. They are also fast fliers, which makes them an excellent game bird—although they mate for life, which seems, somehow, to make them . . . not. After some discussion, however, we calmed our doubts by considering that perhaps the domestic arrangements of the ptarmigan were sufficiently complex—undoubtedly including single ptarmigans, gay ptarmigans, Marv Albert ptarmigans—that we should not overly concern ourselves with them.

Eventually, we arrive at the house where we are to stay; it stands amidst crumbling Viking walls and looks down the length of a fjord. Unfortunately, snowfall has been unusually light this year; which means the birds are higher up in the hills than normal; which means we are in for a lot of hiking.




Dressed, finally, for the freezing cold, we head off with the dogs. With the wind blowing briskly into our faces, we climb for an exhausting hour over frozen fields to the snow-covered brush. All of a sudden, we notice that Mossie is pointing; she's standing still with her right forward leg tucked under her. We unlock the safety latches on the guns and move in a line up behind her; a flutter of brilliant white feathers makes a break to the left, we unload, and the bird falls. Kara jumps forward to retrieve.

*Unfortunately, snowfall has been unusually light this year; which means the birds are higher up in the hills than normal; which means we are in for a lot of hiking.*

The excitement rejuvenates us, and after examining the bird and placing it in the pouch, we tramp off in search of another. It's not long before Mossie has found one. This time, we see it huddled on the ground up ahead and wonder, for a moment, about the propriety of shooting it before it flies. (There is a joke about two hunters who spot a bird running along the ground. As one of them takes aim, the other says to him, "You're not going to shoot him while he's running on the ground, are you?" "Of course not," the first replies. "I'm going to wait till he stops.") However, we decide that it's all right to shoot it "for the pot." Just before we take him, we see that there is another right beside him. They go together—no widows this time around.

We get two more before it's time to head back to the house. The sun has been setting for hours—after taking most of the day to rise barely 15 degrees—but now it begins to settle below the horizon. As the colors fade, the sky grows dark and cold, and we get back to the lodge just before it turns black outside. Our muscles are aching, and we waste no time breaking open a bottle of *brennivín*, the Icelandic schnapps, marketed elsewhere under the label Black Death. We soon feel much better.

Of the million ptarmigan living in Iceland, more than one hundred thousand are shot every year, and of those more than half end up on the Christmas table—*rjúpa* being the traditional Icelandic Christmas feast, according to Sagas a thousand years old. (Interestingly, Icelanders can read these stories with no difficulty whatsoever, the language, in the absence of immigration, having been almost perfectly preserved.) Our five ptarmigan, sautéed in butter and garnished only with salt and pepper, make for a feast indeed; the meat tastes like perfect venison, only less sharp and—because we have earned it—infinitely more satisfying. We sleep like Viking kings.

In the morning, we hike back up the rocky hills. The air is still and Mossie cannot find a scent. We trudge forward and startle a flock of seven ptarmigan which glide off toward the fjord, safely out of range. But as we work our way up and down the hillside, we soon find others. Often we miss, disappointing the dogs. But even then, the fresh Nordic air and the pure mountain water we drink from the gurgling streams are satisfaction complete.

As my friend and I come over a peak in mid-afternoon, we hear shots and see a crow tumbling from the sky. Arni has taken her because crows eat ptarmigan eggs. My friend asks suspiciously if we are expected to eat her. He says, later, that he was reminded of the forest ranger who, coming upon an old, old man eating crow in a national park, warns him that it is illegal to kill crows. The man replies that he has spent his whole life in the forest and knows no other way of

*(Continues on page 61)*



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### OLIVER

life; the ranger takes pity and lets him off with a warning. But, still surprised that the man is actually eating a crow, the ranger asks him what it tastes like. The old man replies, Somewhere between spotted owl and bald eagle.

We walk back down the hillside toward the farm. The sun is dropping; we are tired. Although we have five ptarmigan for the pot, I want one more for the taxidermist. As we come over the crest of a hill we see, once again, that Mossie is standing still. Arni spots one bird, then another, and then another. We circle round until we have a clear shot, move in, and fire. My ptarmigan falls, the two others get away.

Then it's back down the hill, back to the lodge, more *brennivín*, more Christmas food, and finally, sleep.

The next morning, the sky is grey and snow has begun to fall. We load up the car and wind our way back toward Reykjavik, where, unfortunately, the restaurant we had hoped to visit has closed for the afternoon; we are unable to savor the whale steak they serve, and must settle for puffin at a restaurant near Keflavik airport. We finish our meal, say goodbye (*bless* in Icelandic) to Arni, Kara, and Mossie, board the plane, and head home.

Back in New York, as I'm climbing into bed, I get a call from my brother. My family, charged with care of Eliza, has failed to notice that her feeder has jammed. Poor Eliza is dead. Was it coincidence? Or did she know, somehow, what I had been up to at the ends of the Earth, and decide to fly? □

# *BOOKS IN BRIEF*

*Chinese Views of Future Warfare, edited by Michael Pillsbury (National Defense University Press, 421 pp., $22)*

AMERICANS who think of China's military as a rag-tag outfit mired in premodern strategies of "people's war," human-wave assaults, and so on are in for a shock. Mr. Pillsbury, a China scholar and Pentagon consultant, has translated forty-odd contemporary articles by Chinese military strategists, all gleaned from specialized but open-source books and journals. The subjects range from general doctrine to reforms of the Chinese defense industry to the so-called Revolution in Military Affairs (i.e., the computerization of battle management which is revolutionizing U.S. strategy and capabilities, as we saw a hint of in the Gulf War). Most important are the articles in Section IV, which focus on the latter topic. The analyses of what warfare (land, sea, air, and space) will look like in the Information Age of the twenty-first century are more sophisticated than most American military writings on the subject. More than that: the Chinese, who recognize that they are a generation behind in this field, are zeroing in on the vulnerabilities of a high-tech superpower that relies on this stuff. Anti-satellite, anti-radar, anti-stealth, and anti-computer techniques have definitely piqued their interest; they are thinking about such things as how weaker powers can defeat stronger ones by "crippling attacks" on their opponents' information systems. The book is an eye-opener (with a good introductory summary by the editor), and it is already causing ripples in our heretofore complacent Pentagon and intelligence agencies. A very important book.

—PETER W. RODMAN

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# ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

## Orderly Thought On Clinton

NEW YORK, JANUARY 27

It is impossible for anyone to think about the Clinton business without making certain assumptions. The obligation is to make reasonable assumptions. They are, in this case, that he a) had sex with Monica Lewinsky and b) lied about it. Dismiss (for these purposes) the other stuff, allegedly telling her not to talk, arranging with pals to get her taken care of, the question whether Kenneth Starr acted reasonably in getting the larger mandate, whether Linda Tripp is primarily a fortune seeker, whether she acted ethically in her eavesdropping. Forget it. Stick with the basic assumption.

First question: Did Clinton, by having sex with the girl, break any laws? Derivative question: Does it matter?

There are no laws against consensual sex even if adulterous. At least, no federal laws or D.C. laws. But the scaffolding of this case is a little different in big ways. The editorial writer of the *New York Post* shrewdly summoned the case of the master sergeant who was given 25 years for imposing sex on subordinates. It is implicit in the military code that the authority of higher rank renders especially heinous sexual misconduct with a person of lower rank. Is there an applicability here, given that the President is Commander-in-Chief and that Miss Lewinsky was a federal employee? The law spares us rigid applications of codes in noncomparable situations, but isn't there enough left over in the senior/subordinate situation to warrant our attention?

Does the age differential concern us? Well, yes: 50 years old over 21 years old implies a bimboization of the relations between senior and junior. It is quite simply unnatural. It smacks of pedophilia.

Does it matter that the sex was adulterous? Well yes it does. Why? Because the Christian law affirmed by Bill Clinton when he attends church on Sundays proscribes adultery. Here we are operating entirely outside the framework of positive law written by legislatures. Is the Christian law a serious law? It is for those who subscribe to it, and Mr. Clinton does. Or says he does. Or—and this is the only perspective we can impose, given a basic familiarity with human conduct—is this merely one more example of the sinfulness of God's creatures? Yes, of course, and God forgives his creatures seventy times seven. But there has to be repentance. Is Clinton contrite? It is safe to suppose that he wishes it had never happened. But it did happen, and contrition is not suggested by claims to innocence.

Isn't adultery to be taken as more merely than an offense done by a single person with consequences visited only upon himself, on the order of profaning the Sabbath, or taking drugs or alcohol to extremes? Yes, adultery is a personal sin but also a sin against one's spouse. That is the reason why most states permit divorces if adultery can be documented. So that we have a sin not just masturbatory in dimension, but a sin of disloyalty to Mrs. Clinton.

Is the role of a President relevant here? Yes, it is. Presidents are expected to have normal appetites. The old tradition of the droit du seigneur encouraged even the notion that the Chief could have his sexual way with whatever subordinate he chose. Well, that really is not the American way. The President is constrained from being a role model because all Presidents need to be ambitious beyond the point of seemliness. In order to appease such ambition it is necessary to stretch truths and engage in theatrical and tendentious reasoning. Put another way, a Socrates or a St. Paul could never run for President and retain his distinctive characteristics. But even making these allowances, the President has to reciprocate in some way the dignity with which he is treated. In speaking to him we say, "Mr President." When he enters a room everybody else stands up. When he moves out into the street, other traffic is held back. That dignity paid to him requires a reciprocating gear. The President watches his language in public. He is dressed in coat and tie in appropriate situations. He answers his mail. If the President engages in adultery, he denies the dignity of his office.

*"It's okay with me if the rich get richer—what scares me is the politicians getting more political."*

The only question that bears thought at this juncture is whether Bill Clinton should be forced to resign if he doesn't undertake to do so on his own initiative.

The above is a formal exercise based on the most reasonable assumption given what is now public knowledge. □

## Are You a Right-Wing Conspirator?

NEW YORK, JANUARY 30

There is much revelry in the land of the American Right over the charge by Hillary Clinton that the case against her husband is the doing of a "vast right-wing conspiracy." A conspiracy is "an agreement to perform together an illegal, wrongful, or subversive act." If you study the charge carefully and apply strictly the laws of logic, you would have to ask the question, How did the American Right conspire to cause Bill Clinton to engage in illegal fundraising practices, wrongful adulterous acts, and subversive attempts to suppress testimony? . . . No no, of course she did not mean it that way, but she ought to worry a little about the applicability of sound reason to her harried defense.

What is easy to acknowledge is that the right wing opposes her husband, as why should it not? He is a Democratic President with the conventional enthusiasms for more and greater government, and shortsighted in foreign and military policy. The rhetorical effort is to identify aberrational right-wing activity as essential to the case against President Clinton, but it isn't.

Frequent references are made to a privately produced film about Clinton which is disreputable. It tells the viewer that in all probability Clinton knew about the killing of Vincent Foster, which was almost certainly done by another hand than Foster's. It suggests that Little Rock was a drug laundering center etc., etc., etc.

On such matters a little perspective is in order. a) There is always an irresponsible right wing, and b) there is always an irresponsible left wing. Right-wing kookism flourished in the late Fifties and Sixties under the banner of the John Birch Society. Its founder, Robert Welch, convinced himself, and a few others, that Dwight Eisenhower was an agent of the Soviet Union. Before that, the misguided Right tended to think that Jews were engaged in conspiracies of various kinds to damage the United


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States. There isn't much evidence that these conspiracies bore fruit. Jewish-Americans prospered through it all, and every call by the John Birch Society to impeach Earl Warren enhanced his prestige.

The kooky Left was rather more mischievous in its effects on history. Conspiratorial is exactly the way to describe American Communists and their fellow travelers, who did everything from infiltrating government to stealing the secrets of the atom bomb. Every now and again we hear about people who disclose that Wall Street is planning another depression, or that AIDS was an invention of the CIA to arrest the growth of the black population.

It is unquestionably true that the extreme Right is taking pleasure from the difficulties Bill Clinton is having. That's human nature, isn't it? Put it this way: Suppose that a Magic Fairy with a wand had volunteered in June 1972 to visit President Nixon and dissuade him from his mortal conversation urging the CIA to quiet the FBI—the smoking-gun moment. Would the far Left have been pleased that this subversive moment in American history had been expunged? Answer: No. What the Left most wanted was to discredit Nixon and get rid of him. If the same magic lady were to appear tomorrow and offer to restore Miss Lewinsky's virginity, do we suppose that the right wing would be pleased? One more virgin in exchange for the removal of Bill Clinton's tenure? . . . You're right.

Does it really matter that the independent counsel is a right-winger? It would matter terribly if it could be established that he had engaged in improprieties. Some reasonable people believe that he has; that he is to be compared not to the Internal Revenue agent who gets wind that John Jones had a million dollars of unreported income, but to the Internal Revenue agent who is told to target John Jones and find something he has done wrong, no matter what. We have plenty of time ahead of us for a rational discussion of the question of Mr. Starr's extending his mandate. Was this ideological aggression? Or an act of thoroughness consistent with the responsibilities of an independent counsel?

Mrs. Clinton is a trained lawyer, and to disparage the motives of the prosecution is standard Defense Tactics 101. She knows it, even if it's true that some of the right wing salivates over the problems of a Chief Executive who has not always been kind and understanding about the problems and desires of the right wing. The whole business was handled rather neatly by Mr. William Ginsburg, the attorney for Monica Lewinsky. He said at a press conference, "I'm not a member of the right-wing conspiracy. I'm not even a right-winger." □

## *A Shift in Abortion Sentiment?*

NEW YORK, JANUARY 20

Gerald Ford picked an odd moment to declaim against Republican opposition to abortion. The interview in the *New York Times* appeared on January 20. Abortion, he said, "is an issue that creates significant turmoil in the party and ought not to be a partisan political issue." Four days earlier a *New York Times* story carried the result of a public-opinion poll. That poll reported that "the American public still largely supports legalized abortion but says it should be harder to get and less readily chosen." And speaking of turmoil: "At base, the country remains irreconcilably riven over what many consider the most divisive American issue since slavery, with half the population considering abortion murder, the poll found."

Now just as there were Southerners 150 years ago who believed that slaves should be free but didn't free their own slaves, there are, the poll indicates, Americans who believe that abortion is murder but who nevertheless (one-third of them) don't believe laws against abortion should be binding. Don't shake your head—paradoxes are what happens. The abolitionist who owned slaves, the pro-lifer who says, Well, just this one time. The disjunction extends indefinitely—the libertarian who denounces Social Security and cashes his monthly check, the Christian who skips Sunday services.

Two points crystallize. One has to do of course with the advice of Gerald Ford. Most recently the Republicans passed by a proposed litmus test which would have forbidden the passing of GOP election funds to any candidate who failed to oppose partial-birth abortions. Mr. Ford applauded that decision but went further by recommending, in effect, that the Republican Party simply pull out of the abortion controversy. How do you pull out of a controversy when one-half of the American people consider the 1.2 million yearly abortions as 1.2 million acts of murder? There are devices the polemicist can try on the stump. To the questioner who says, "How can we fail to consider abortion a political question when we have laws that condone abortion? Laws are for refinement by democratic means!" the speaker can reply that we aren't talking about laws but about a constitutional right. And it's true that constitutional spelunkers came up with that human right 25 years ago, but also true that more than thirty states at this point have reduced the absolute right to abortion by modifications. A waiting period, in some cases; parental advisement; and other constraints. We have a constitutional right to bear arms, but that doesn't mean you can sport an AK-47 around town.

The other crystallization in the controversy has to do with race. The distinguished essayist Roger Rosenblatt coined the term "permit but discourage" in his book *Life Itself: Abortion in the American Mind*. He believes that the American people are moving against abortion, but on the moral, not the political, plane. Abortion, Mr. Rosenblatt is saying, is one of those things one disapproves of and, on the whole, doesn't do: like keeping a mistress, or having a night out on the town.

The graphs published by the *New York Times* pursuant to its survey show that there is definitely a movement among those who engage in abortion. But it has a racial edge. Whereas 25 years ago 80 per cent of abortions in this country were undergone by white women, that figure reduces now to 60 per cent. At the same time, where 20 per cent of abortions were undergone by black women in 1973, that figure is now almost 40 per cent. So that while abortions have reduced by 25 per cent among whites, among blacks they have doubled.

Analysts will comment that 25 years ago blacks, relatively poor, could not afford abortions; or that there was ignorance about the availability of the procedure. And others might say that white Americans, better educated on the whole, can more easily master the means and the discipline to avoid unwanted pregnancies.

All very well. But we also ought to take into account a datum once before mentioned in this space, notwithstanding its ugliness. It is that some enthusiasts for abortion are motivated by the relative figures: three times the incidence of abortions among blacks as among whites. A form of relative population control not unrelated in tendency from what the late William Shockley came up with. When Dr. Shockley wasn't off winning Nobel Prizes, he labored to find some way to reduce the rate of black reproduction. What he desired to counter, he said, was "dysgenics"—"retrogressive evolution through the disproportionate reproduction of the genetically disadvantaged." He came up with the idea of bribing individual black Americans to go off to Africa. Another way is to encourage more of them to go to abortion clinics.

Is this cultural polarization what the polls are now telling us about? □

*(Universal Press Syndicate)*



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# THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER

FLORENCE KING

IT'S deadline time and I'm winging it. Usually it takes me four days to do a column: two days to write it, one day to revise it, and one day to polish it. But there's no time for that now because I waited too long.

I should have started this column a week ago but I have been glued to the TV watching the Come Again Kid deny non-adultery in the wrong verb tense. My deadline is the same day as the State of the Union speech; there's no telling what will have happened (future perfect) by the time you read this, but I have to write *something* so I'll ask you to forego my usual carefully prepared food for thought and take (ink)potluck: a free-associative mélange of some of the things that went through my mind as I watched fate close in on Deep Croak.

. . . It is 1952. Now 16, I have lost my baby fat and gone from duckling to swan, and my mother, who normally pays no attention to anything except baseball and her hero, Sen. Joe McCarthy, is being uncharacteristically maternal. We are washing dishes when suddenly, out of the blue, she says:

"If a man ever asks you to do something funny to him, you tell him to go to hell, you hear?"

"What do you mean, 'something funny'?"

"Never mind, just promise me."

Mystified, I promised. The mystery deepened as she swung off on one of her patriotic tangents.

"That's why the French can't win a war without our help! It saps their strength! They're so busy doing something funny to each other that the Germans just walk right in!"

I got A's in history but I couldn't sort that one out. I tried my grandmother.

"What does it mean when a man asks a woman to do something funny to him?"

"Your grandfather was a perfect gentleman."

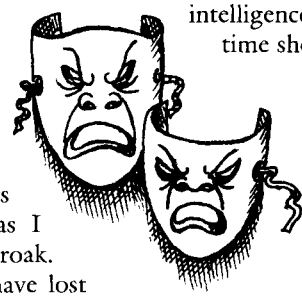
*Miss King is the author of* The Florence King Reader *and other books.*

I might have known. It was her standard reply to all sex questions. Next I consulted my best girlfriend, who drew a blank.

"Maybe we could look it up in the dictionary?" she suggested hopefully.

"Oh, sure. If it isn't under 'something funny' we can try 'funny comma something.'"

She had an older married sister who had come through with several tidbits we couldn't pry out of our mothers, so we dropped by her place for an intelligence briefing, but this time she balked.



"You two don't need to know about such things. Just remember that men have a terrible name they call women who do something funny."

"What?" we chorused.

"I wouldn't repeat it."

. . . It is 1956. Now twenty, I finally figure out what Something Funny means from, of all things, a supplementary text my history professor put on reserve in the library.

Félix Faure, president of France 1895–1899, died during a visit from his mistress. Hearing her terrified screams, his aides broke down the door and found him seated on a sofa with the mistress kneeling in front of him, her long black hair clutched in his death-locked fingers. After freeing the hysterical woman, the aides put the fallen leader in bed with his hands folded over a crucifix, a scene immortalized by a newspaper drawing of the time that was reproduced in the reserve book under the title, "Death of Faure (Official Version)." My mother was right.

What strikes me about today's oral-sex psychodrama is where the kooky thinking is coming from. My generation of women had our rationalizations, but they were *ours*, not men's. The erotic contortionism we called "Everything But" made us the Keystone Kops of heavy petting, stripping gears and kicking holes in dashboards with high heels, but our dates not only put up with it, they respected us for being virgins because we had them convinced that nice girls never got in the back seat.

That kind of female power vanishes when men do the kooky thinking. The emerging theory that fellatio does not "count" as adultery or even constitute a sexual relationship proves that letting men get hold of rationalizations is like letting Wrong Way Corrigan get hold of aviation.

Whether or not Monica Lewinsky brings down the Clinton Presidency, she has certainly succeeded in weakening the "womyn" wall of political correctness. One commentator after another referred to her as a "young lady," a "girl," a "kid," and even, once or twice, a "child." Each time these diminutives emerged, Clinton seemed to get older and older.

ANOTHER point of linguistic interest was Lewinsky's taped statement, "I've lied all my life." Male commentators took it literally, but most media women made less of it. I daresay they were thinking, as I was, of the hyperbole of girltalk. You have to add mental italics—"I've *lied* all my *life*!"—to hear the giggle and the long disjointed story about nothing in particular that usually accompany statements of this sort.

Whether Clinton goes in disgrace or stays under a cloud will make little difference to serious lovers of language because either way we are in for it. Face it: no matter how many women have done something funny to Clinton, not one of them will ever be called a fellatrix, and it's a dead cert that "sexual addiction" counselors will do their tone-deaf best to give satyriasis a bad name.

I must admit that the tumult is expertly plotted. The best-loved novels always contain two very different women who play off each other: Scarlett and Melanie, Becky and Amelia, Anna and Kitty, the angel and the hussy, the blonde and the brunette, good sister/bad sister. Now we have Paula Jones with her signature line, "Ah jes' wanna git mah good name back," and Monica Lewinsky with "Schmucko"—Daisy May meets Marjorie Morningstar.

Now to spin one for my mother: I don't believe the "sophisticates" who keep telling pollsters that a President's sex life is his own business. It's merely a roundabout way of excepting themselves from the charge of puritanism regularly hurled at Americans by—the French. □



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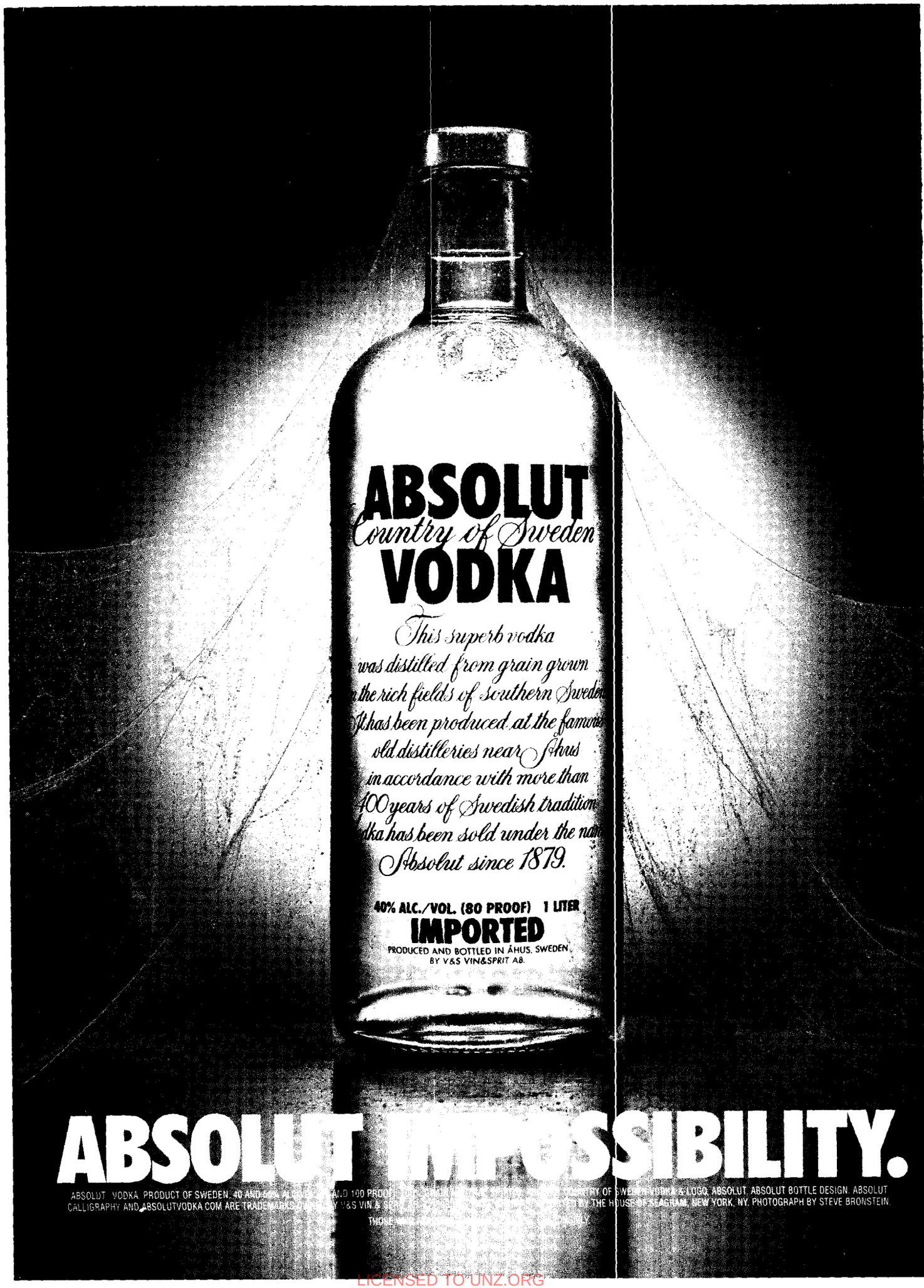
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